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A descriptive analysis of aboriginal participation and equity issues in New South Wales higher education - a participant observer's view

Nerida Blair
University of Wollongong

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**A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION
AND EQUITY ISSUES IN NEW SOUTH WALES HIGHER
EDUCATION - A PARTICIPANT OBSERVER'S VIEW**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS (HONOURS)

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Nerida Blair, B.A., Dip.Ed.



School of Policy and
Technology Studies in
Education, 1990

777856

Dedicated to my mother, Dorothy, and my father, Harold Blair.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study is the compilation of many people's personal and professional experiences, thoughts and beliefs. I would like to thank Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout New South Wales, in particular past and present members of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (N.S.W.A.E.C.G.) who have shared their thoughts, beliefs and experiences both directly and indirectly. Their energy has given me the inspiration and support necessary to complete this study. As a group and network of advocates their concerns and efforts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education are tireless. They challenged me and taught me more than I could ever learn from any book or academic endeavour.

Too often the efforts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in Colleges and Universities to create a more positive environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to succeed in, and to educate non-Aboriginal people about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia, go without acknowledgement. My sincere thanks to these people; my peers for their support and continued efforts in advocating for reform.

The support of my family; Dorothy, Warren, Kay, Allirra and Janannie, my staff; Dorothy, David, Janice and Susan, and my friends in particular Lindy, Vicki, Bob, Narelle, Jude, and Peter has ensured the completion of this thesis through their constant reinforcement and pressure. In a small way I hope that this study will open up people's eyes so that the struggles of our elder statespeople for the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and a future for our children will not go unrecognised. They have taught me much and there is much more to learn.

My sincere thanks also to my typist, Trish Wilkins. I would also like to acknowledge my two supervisors, Professor Carla Fasano for her patience, integrity, her endeavour for excellence, her wisdom and in all humility her mentorship; and Dr Arthur Smith for his guidance, patience and energy when I needed it most.

DECLARATION

This is to certify that the work presented in this thesis has not been submitted to any other University or Institution for the award of a degree.

Nerida Blair

ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as students and staff, in higher education in New South Wales. Some traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education concepts and practices are presented as a background and focus to the more specific discussion.

The study traces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to schooling since 1788. Schooling outcomes and participation in higher education are inextricably linked. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have not had appropriate access to schooling, and, as a result, have only recently (during the 1980s) participated in higher education.

The climate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy and organisation from the 1960s to the 1980s becomes the focus for presentation of a profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation both as students and staff in higher education. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education as expressed primarily through conference reports and surveys are also discussed.

Anti-discrimination legislation is analysed in the context of creating equal employment opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, thereby increasing participation.

The study concludes with three potential scenarios and three strategies for more appropriate and greater access and participation in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABSEG	Aboriginal Secondary Grants. The term 'grant' has recently been eliminated (1987) and replaced by 'Allowance Scheme'
ABSTUDY	Aboriginal Study Grants for tertiary students
AEC	Aboriginal Education Centre, a support centre within a HEC
AEU	Aboriginal Education Unit, a support unit within a HEC
AESU	Aboriginal Education Support Unit
ALS	Aboriginal Legal Service
CDE	Commonwealth Department of Education
CDEET	Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, the amalgamation of CDE and DEIR
CTEC	Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DEIR	Department of Employment and Industrial Relations
DEOPE	Directorate of Equal Opportunity and Public Employment

EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
HEB	Higher Education Board, NSW
HEC	Higher Education Centre, any college or university. The term is preferred to that of Higher Education Institution. It was accepted in June 1985 at the NSWAECEG Aboriginal Community Awareness Seminar that the concept of 'institution' provoked too many negative reactions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. An alternative term was be used: HEC.
MAA	Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs
NAEC	National Aboriginal Education Committee
NSWAECG	New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
NSWAEU	New South Wales Aboriginal Education Unit, a unit within the Directorate of Special Programs in the NSW Education Ministry
NSWTF	New South Wales Teachers' Federation
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TAP	Training for Aboriginals Program

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander(1) student and staff participation in higher education in New South Wales. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education is a phenomenon of the 1970s and 1980s. There are many interwoven factors that have made this such a recent phenomenon. Factors such as an increased recognition of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educative philosophies and beliefs, access to schooling and higher education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community perceptions of education and government legislations. This study will explore each of these and their impact on participation. This first chapter provides an overview of the factors which have had impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in New South Wales. It distils the framework for the thesis. A discussion of the research methodology used characterises the final section of this chapter.

1.1 Focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation and Equity in Higher Education in New South Wales

The essential underpinnings of this thesis are those traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational philosophies and values which are on-going and constant. It is these philosophies and values that have ensured the development and survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These philosophies and values are fundamental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander future educational success. Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have derived our(2)

philosophies and values from the traditional ones. A knowledge of these traditions is crucial in understanding future direction and success. This is especially so as surveys among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have revealed the perceived importance of a higher education that leads to the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to determine and manage our community destinies while retaining an intact, and indeed growing culture. The second chapter will provide a cultural dimension to the study by focusing on some of these traditional philosophies and values.

With non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander settlement in Australia, great cultural changes were both inevitable and necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survival. Traditional educational philosophies and practices became submerged under new systems. The third chapter will trace the historical developments in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in New South Wales from 1788 to 1988. More specifically it will trace different government legislations relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as they impacted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to schooling.

The changes and legislation that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have experienced have coloured our perceptions of education. Being denied access to appropriate schooling and then being forced to attend public schools has, as my investigation demonstrates, created suspicion and cynicism among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy has led Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to focus on increasing participation in higher education in the last two decades. The fourth chapter will discuss some structural changes that have impacted on increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation: changes such

as organised State and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education advisory groups, and the development of special programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within higher education centres.

A profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education up to 1988 will be the focus for the fifth chapter. This chapter more specifically will deal with students and employees, in particular, those people employed in academic positions. Participation in higher education is the culmination of all of the experiences outlined in the previous chapters. The focus for this chapter is therefore the product of these experiences, which establishes a link between schooling, higher education and academic employment. Access to higher education has traditionally been through the schooling system; be it access as a scholar or employee. It has until recently been necessary to have successfully completed secondary schooling to gain access to higher education. Successful completion of higher education has been necessary for academic employment. For the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people successful completion at either of these stages has not necessarily led to this transition. For a long period of time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been unable to meet the criteria for academic employment. This situation has developed because of the disastrous combination of being denied access to schooling and developing resultant negative attitudes towards schooling in particular, education generally. As a consequence there have been no pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into higher education employment.

Statistical and documentary evidence will be used to present a profile of the current situation; in terms of the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres,(3) the level of positions held, people's access to decision-making within the higher education centre, the academic background of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed, the relevance of an academic background, working conditions, roles, terms of employment and so on.

A large number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had some very negative schooling experiences some of which are highlighted in the third chapter. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education have changed dramatically over the last three decades. The structural changes, the forms of advocacy, the numbers participating in higher education in the 1970s and 1980s are testimony to these attitude shifts. The sixth chapter analyses and discusses various conference reports and recommendations, commissioned reports, and surveys. This chapter discusses various issues that have emerged as important issues in a variety of forums against a background of what is actually happening in the higher education sector for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There was little vision amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of education beyond the compulsory age of school attendance. It will become clear that until the 1970s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were very sceptical about the benefits of higher education. The change in perceptions has influenced the determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to struggle and advocate for access and participation in higher education.

The introduction of anti-discrimination legislation in the 1970s and 1980s at both federal and state levels has been a contributing factor impacting on the increased participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education. The seventh chapter will present an overview of anti-discrimination legislation as it impacts on higher education, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within HECs. Particular attention will be paid to the NSW Anti-discrimination Act and its scheduling of higher education centres in 1983. The identifying of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as one of the target groups within the legislation meant recognition by the State Government that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had been denied equal employment opportunity throughout the sector. This legislation prescribed the development of action plans for higher education centres and meant

therefore that they had to consider the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, they had to assess their own situation with regard to how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were employed in their centre; what type of positions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were employed in; whether they held continuing appointments; the type of funding sources used to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, internal or external; and whether the institution actively recruited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into employment. For the first time higher education centres had to both assess and address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and training within their own walls. This chapter will assess the impact of this legislation on increased participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the higher education sector.

The final chapter will synthesize the factors that have affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education. A positive, realistic, implementable set of strategies that reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, experiences and aspirations will be presented in conclusion. The information, insights and conclusions in this thesis have not been gathered and assessed by one individual. As an Aboriginal author I bring together the ideas and experience of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people whom I have consulted directly and vicariously. This thesis belongs to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within New South Wales. It is hoped that the strategies suggested will not fall on deaf ears and that the higher education centres in part through this thesis will listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and will finally begin to implement the broader Government policy of "self-determination".

1.2 Socio-Political-Economic Factors Affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation in Higher Education in NSW

Socio-political-economic factors that have affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural development must also be presented as a context for discussion in this thesis. Sources such as Watts and Chambers 1976, Fitzgerald Report 1976, census data, and the Report of the Commissioner for Community Relations 1981 detail this information for further reading. Suffice to say that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians "remain the most impoverished, ill-educated, ill-fed, poorly housed, disease ridden, dependent and powerless segment of Australian society".(Howard 1982, p.82) The extent to which these factors have impacted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education can never be underestimated, and must not be forgotten in any discussion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in education.

1.3 Research Methodology

Perceptions and values that filter through this study are unavoidably those of an Aboriginal person actively involved in advocating reform in Aboriginal education. Professional purposes and goals, particularly those aimed at promoting increased quality participation and access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education and employment, permeate the research methodology through which data was collected and processed. As will become clear, in the field of inquiry the researcher has been both participant and observer. Views expressed, especially those relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of formal education, may consequently reflect some degree of cultural and perceptual partiality. In attempting to represent those aspects of experience which are subtle and in many cases unquantifiable, much of the reporting in the thesis is qualitative in nature. Although

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education has been very much a phenomenon of the 1970s and 1980s, the researcher has been involved in the struggle for reform in this area for the last 13 years; that is for a substantial part of the era of reform. The researchers' involvement has been through the roles of student, teacher, administrator and curriculum developer at both individual, institutional and State departmental levels. As participant-observer, as an Aboriginal educator immersed in process, an amount of 'personal knowledge' (Polanyi, 1958) has developed and become interwoven within the study. As the experience has been so recent and pervasive very little prior research, including the compilation of statistical data, has been completed. Incorporation of personal knowledge has been necessary to pull together a significant number of 'loose threads', knowledge which has been gleaned, via a process akin to osmosis, from numerous points of contact and interaction with members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The researcher has essentially been a research tool herself.

The majority of perceptions in the study are those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians; as communicated to an Aboriginal researcher. As is well documented, relatively few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have prepared research for academic purposes. The fact that this study has developed around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander points of view indicates that new ground has been broken. Potential may exist, therefore, for evolution of frameworks for inquiry which suit the needs of the field; a need which, in most cases, seems to require broad exploratory, descriptive 'mapping' by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ourselves.

In light of the preceding statement it is a view of the researcher that academic studies undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ought not lose their essence by being forced into conceptual frameworks which incorporate only (or predominantly) non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principles, procedures and

values. Experiences and 'findings' of this study suggest the following issues as worthy of careful consideration.

1. The value placed on collective experience and personal knowledge by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as opposed to apparent devaluing of it by some non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2. The use of the possessive, for example 'our', to signify an identification with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. The relative importance of the participant observer, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education inquiry. Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have not only advocated for reforms but have lived and been responsible for the implementation of these changes, and lived the consequences.
4. The use of the oral tradition; the reliance on verbatim comments rather than second or third order interpretation.

Consideration of such issues could open up research in the field of 'Aboriginality' and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers. It could also lead to a more fruitful dialogue between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and those non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers who practise similar research approaches. Ultimately, greater depth and quality of academic research will emerge, hence understanding.

Approaches to data collection throughout this study have been many and varied. Analysis of government documents, committee agendas and minutes and various conference reports have provided useful information. The researcher has had the

advantage of participating in and organising several of these conferences and committees. Personal and professional experience (and knowledge) thus become incorporated.(Polanyi, 1958) Descriptive analysis of the literature was productive in establishing an historical context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education generally.(Majchrzak, 1984) Policy analysis procedures helped to establish an historical context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education generally. Policy analysis procedures provided concepts and frameworks in and through which Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity policy could be understood.(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984)

Two surveys were circulated during the course of the study, one amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in higher education, another amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people in selected parts of New South Wales. Ideally, I would have liked the opportunity to follow up survey responses with individual interviews. This was not possible, however, due to restrictions imposed by time availability and funding. This could be an important area for further inquiry. This study is not seen as an end in itself, but a beginning.

Overall the response rate to the surveys was not as high as might have been hoped for. The low return rate can, however, be understood. There are a number of methodological problems encountered when conducting research amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The sixth chapter of this study elaborates on problems linked to a mismatch between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and existing non-Aboriginal survey methodology. Some of the problems elaborated on include firstly, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander oral tradition as opposed to a written tradition, which tends to be the basis of most survey research methodology. Secondly, the definition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community or from a research methodological perspective, the definition of sample. Thirdly, the level of literacy amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities affects written responses to surveys. Fourthly, questioning techniques vary in terms of Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander conceptual, analytical and processing skills in response to questioning styles. The importance of local knowledge and use of local community people in the research process is of great importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as opposed to the often more distant and abstract (second or third order) approach adopted by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Finally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have articulated in many conference and meeting forums much suspicion and mistrust of traditional research conducted amongst our communities by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we have been expected to fill in questionnaires and surveys almost to the limit of endurance. As a result, people are suspicious about the intent of surveys and research as well as how the responses will be interpreted and used. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will protect and withhold their real insights by responding to researchers in a way that the researcher visibly wants.

Interviews were conducted with Ms Allison Ziller, Director of the Office of the Directorate of Equal Employment Opportunity; Ms Pat O'Shane, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chief Magistrate; and Mr Bob Morgan, President of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group at the time of interview. Meetings with these people provided many insights into the discussion on the effects of Equal Employment Opportunity legislation, on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in NSW, and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy.

A retrospective dimension was used in this study to establish a backdrop against which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education could be examined.

Finally, statistics for this study were compiled from the few existing sources: CDEET, Census data and some survey data. There is a considerable discrepancy

between the sources and in some cases, within the same source. Possible reasons for this will be discussed further into the study.

Chapter Notes

1. Reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may appear cumbersome to the reader. The researcher is acknowledging the Torres Strait Islander call for independence. She is also following the current approach of recording independently Australia's indigenous people and thereby recognising the cultural identity of each. All previous reference has subsumed the term Torres Strait Islander in the term Aboriginal. The words 'Koori' and 'Murri' are used interchangeably with the term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Both terms are accepted terminology amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW, giving us a separate identity - which the term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander does not. For further information read Miller, 1985, p.vii.

2. Our: the use of the possessive form emphasises the origins of the author, and the sense of having experienced in some form what is being discussed. Abstract reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is offensive; it is almost a denial of one's Aboriginality.

3. Refer to list of abbreviations, p.x.

CHAPTER TWO

CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE STUDY

An understanding of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education philosophies and practices is fundamental to understanding the differences that emerge when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures try to communicate with each other, as in higher education centres. In the communication process between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander there has been an assumption that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is simplistic, thus inferior. This assumption often developed as a result of anthropological philosophy, research and writings which presented simplistic images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.(e.g. Elkin, 1980; Mulvaney, 1983) These images have been reinforced until recently through the education systems within Australian society. It is therefore in these 'places of learning' that communication between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is most problematic. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we approach higher education through our cultural values. We expect to learn through these same values. The patterns of participation in higher education need to be analysed within appropriate cultural frameworks or on "Murri terms of reference".(Watson, 1988, p.9).

Higher education in Australia exemplifies a tradition which is in stark contrast to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions of education ...its interchangeability and division into a multitude of disciplines indicates, perpetuates and intensifies its detachment from this land; a rootlessness.(Watson, 1988, p.x)

The cultural stance of this study therefore has a timeless dimension encompassing time since the creation of our land. It does not begin with Captain Cook and it does not begin 40,000 years ago as suggested by most anthropologists, archaeologists and historians as the beginning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history. This study begins when the land was created and when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were created from it.

2.1 Focus on Concepts, Philosophies and Practices of Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge pivots around the concept of the land. The land was the teacher; repository and giver of knowledge.

The land held the key to life's secrets. Man was given the knowledge to read the land and for every rock, tree and creek he found an explanation for existence. He did not own the land, the land owned him. To know the land was to know life, for what better way of knowing life than to know the stage on which it was enacted.(Miller, 1985, p.1)

The land was the cornerstone for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spirituality and lore, in fact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander existence. Rueben Kelly, an Aboriginal educator(1) from the Dungadi nation(2) has said

that Aboriginal people could only be identified by the land ... He himself has walked every inch of his tribal boundary even though he has never seen it all. The knowledge has been implanted in the subconscious mind. It has been written in my mind; every sacred footstep, all the terrain.(Kelly, 1988).

Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education is a complex and sophisticated process involving a life-long series of instances of formal learning, administered by especially qualified "teachers" (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

educators - the elders). Each instance of learning involves the transmission of a specific body of knowledge which is holistic in nature.

The life-long process of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learning and the holistic nature of the bodies of knowledge explained are in stark contrast with the front-end models of most learning in non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society and the partition by discipline of the knowledge imparted in higher education. Mr Bob Morgan (current Director of the Aboriginal Education Centre, University of Technology, Sydney) equated the Aboriginal process of learning with the course of a river:

where the flow is continuous but it has many deviations, where it may meander, or it may be temporarily trapped or dammed, where it peaks and ebbs, it passes over rocks, through rapids and cascades down falls but its journey is on-going until it reaches the sea.(Blair, 1985, p.32)

An additional issue to understand in clarifying patterns of participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education is the different set of priorities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have in life. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student may enrol in a formal higher education course but before completion of the course or graduation he or she may have many obstacles to overcome, many deviations such as family and community commitments. Life experience and community commitments for most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a priority to the process of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander formal education. The completion of a stage of education within a particular non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander time sequence is alien for a large number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Our education is segmented into time spans or growth spans, which are different and are broader than those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Our education is segmented into specialist areas of learning or knowledge which again are different from those of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander people. The focus - the land - is different. Our approach is based on a belief that the focus is more important than the sum of all the parts; or each specialist, segmented skill or piece of knowledge. Rueben Kelly explained his education:

I was handed over to the 'bullahs', the wise ladies of the tribe. Each had turns of educating me. They laid me down on a rug and then one each side and they spoke into my subconscious mind and they filled with a purity of our tribal life ... [and] ... education went on night and day, day in day out, month in month out ... these women worked in rotating shifts ... our learning did not stop at 3.30 each week day ... (Kelly, 1988)

In addition to the different structure of knowledge and learning phases, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are used to a different vehicle in transmitting knowledge.

Knowledge in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations was predominantly transmitted orally as opposed to the written forms, predominantly used by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Kelly explains that the mind is a very powerful tool in the storage of knowledge;

Aboriginal people did not need to write knowledge down, they were able to store it in their minds.(Kelly, 1988)

He in fact argues that the need to write things down is a step backwards in the education process. Knowledge was communicated to others in a variety of forms; dance, art, song, drama, storytelling and miming. The emphasis in all of these, with the exception of art, is oral. Repetition, listening and observation were other key practices in communicating knowledge.(Kelly, 1988)

There are a number of other traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education principles and practices important in the context of this study that I shall briefly allude to.(3) Firstly, experiential learning; that is, learning that relates to specific and real situations where practical application of the new knowledge or skill is

important. Experiential learning was a process that linked education, life and the land. Secondly, learning was perceived as an end in itself, where its orientation was with the present not the future nor the past. Knowledge of the past was always given a 'present' orientation. Thirdly, learning was a community activity where co-operation and group learning were fundamental to the sharing of knowledge. Knowledge itself was shared, the focus on the individual was not important. Finally and perhaps most importantly knowledge could be passed on by all, but 'educators' within the nations transmitted special knowledge. The transmission of knowledge was not the sole responsibility of one individual called the teacher, nor was it a one way process. Knowledge was valued because the relationship between the learner and the imparters of knowledge was importantly one of respect. Learning and teaching were co-operative efforts. The social structure or kinship structure of the nation was woven into the learning and teaching process. Culture and education were interwoven. Correct protocol was therefore necessary to protect and nurture the lore and to transmit knowledge effectively. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogy was obviously very dynamic, complex and subtle.

Figure 2.1 provides a pictorial representation of each of the concepts discussed. The cyclic representation indicates the on-going, holistic approach taken in traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching. The interdependency of each of the concepts and processes is indicated as is the gravitation of each of these concepts to the central focus - the land.

Few of the concepts and approaches above are reflected today in non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. These concepts and approaches are by no means unique to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The important fact here is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations existed with complex systems of teaching and learning before 1788 and that elements of these systems do not blend in with contemporary Australian systems of education. This area of traditional

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education must in the near future be a focus for further studies where justice can be done to its complexity. The consideration and incorporation of the principles and practices outlined above by higher education centres may well bridge the gap that currently exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions of education. More importantly it may make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education more meaningful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants.

Some Traditional Aboriginal Education Concepts

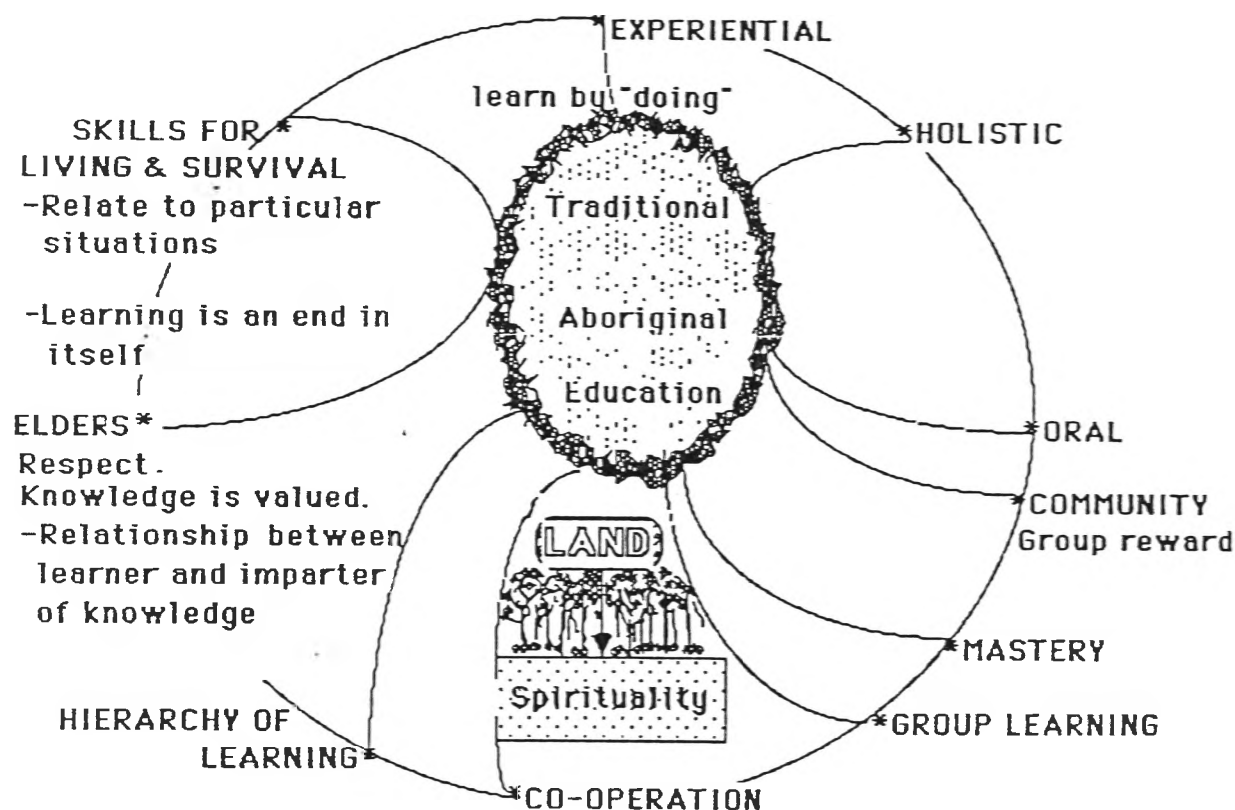


Figure 2.1

Sources: Bourke, 1975, 1979, Hughes, 1984 and Watson, 1988

Chapter Notes

1. The term 'educator' in this paper refers to an 'elder' or a person with vast knowledge and experience to pass on to younger generations.
2. The term nation is preferred to the anthropological term 'tribe'. 'Nation' captures the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. 'Tribe' is an understatement of the diversity.
3. For a more detailed understanding of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education concepts and processes the reader should refer to Bourke, 1984; Elkin, 1980; Hughes, 1984; and Watson, 1988.

CHAPTER THREE

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ACCESS TO SCHOOLING IN NSW 1788-1988

The period of culture contact between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 1788 onwards saw massive changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people practising traditional educational processes. The pace of change through contact became so rapid that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could no longer choose the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts most like their own practices. They were forced into a situation of absorption of all of these non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts if they wished to survive. Government policy and legislation through its instruments of implementation; namely missions and public schools, did much to denigrate and destroy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practices. Miller asserts that the "systematic attempt to destroy Koori identity was at the root of all the Board's policies".(1) He likens these "ruthless policies to the communist attempt to destroy the identity of minority people in Russia". He concludes that "Australia was then, and still is, a democracy, but for years Kooris lived under a totalitarian regime within that democracy".(Miller, 1985, p.170)

In any discussion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to schooling this context must not be forgotten. The remainder of this chapter will focus chronologically on the main events, issues and associated government policies that transformed the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people taught, the way we learnt, the knowledge and the skills taught and the environments these teachings took place in. In sum, the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have participated in schooling. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the time sequence, events and issues.

The History of Aboriginal Education in N.S.W., Chronological Timeline.

Time Period	Government policy/Main Events
B.C.	Traditional practices of Aboriginal education.
1815	Aboriginal institution established at Parramatta
1848-1866	Board of National Education establishes public education in NSW
1867-1880	Council of Education controls public education in N.S.W.
1883	Aborigines Protection Board established (A.P.B.)
S	Comment by minister of Education: George Reid
E S 1909	Government policy of protection - includes missions and reserves, 'half-caste legislation'
P C	
A H 1910	Apprenticing Aboriginal children
R O 1936	Beginnings of organised Aboriginal activism
A O 1938	January 26 day of mourning 'sesquicentenary'
T L	Government policy of ASSIMILATION
E S 1940	Aborigines' Welfare Board replaces Aborigines Protection Board
A	Responsibility for Aboriginal education transferred to the NSW Department of Education. Exclusion of
B	Aboriginal children from public schools: Yass,
O D	North Lismore, Collarenebri, etc.
R E 1944	Need for Aboriginal children to have an exemption certificate to attend public schools
I V	
G E 1946-48	Need for Aboriginal children to have medical certificates to attend public schools
I L	
N O 1951	First Aboriginal graduate from teachers' college in New South Wales
A P	
L E 1962	Second Aboriginal graduate from the University of New South Wales
D	
1965	Third Aboriginal graduate from the University of Sydney. Government policy of INTEGRATION
1967	Commonwealth referendum giving Aboriginal people CITIZENSHIP and the right to vote
1969	ABSTUDY begins
1970	ABSEC begins
1972	Aboriginal Tent Embassy--Canberra Development of Aboriginal flag 'Freedom Ride'--Charles Perkins
	Government policy of SELF-DETERMINATION
1973	Aboriginal Education Unit established in New South Wales Department of Education
1975	Australia ratifies Convention III: discrimination in occupation and employment is outlawed Twenty-one Aboriginal Teaching Assistants employed and required to train at the University of Sydney Aboriginal Teaching Assistants training program Federal Racial Discrimination Act

1976	Year of elimination of all forms of racial discrimination New South Wales Aboriginal Education Consultative Group established. First enclave established at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education, Western Australia
1977	Anti-discrimination Act legislated. National Aboriginal Education committee (N.A.E.C.) established
1978	National Employment and Training Scheme established (N.E.A.T.S.)
1979	N.A.E.C. establish a target of training 1000 Aboriginal teachers by 1990--this includes 268 in New South Wales
1980	Office of Directorate of Equal Opportunity and Public Employment established in New South Wales and the requirement of management plans in public sector employment enforced through part IXA amendment to the New South Wales Anti-discrimination Act. Equal Opportunity Employment becomes policy of New South Wales government in public employment
1981	First Human Rights Commission Act
1982	Enclave established in New South Wales at Milperra College of Advanced Education
1983	Enclaves established at Mitchell C.A.E. and Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education December 16 Higher Education Centres scheduled under section IXA of New South Wales Anti-discrimination Act by proclamation
1984	Sex Discrimination Act legislated
1985	June 1--management plans from Higher Education Centres must be prepared and commence implementation Aboriginal Education Unit Established at University of Wollongong
1986	Commonwealth affirmative action legislation
1988	Celebration of Aboriginal survival
1990	1000 Aboriginal teachers by 1990?

Figure 3.1

Source: Bell 1962, Bridges, 1972 Directorate of Special Programs 1981, E.E.O. Co-ordinator (1986) Mitchell C.A.E., Hains 1978.

3.1 "Civilising"

In the early stages of British colonisation a policy on education did not exist as such. Governor Phillip, however, in his efforts to fulfil his instructions of "living in amity and kindness with the natives" (Bell, 1962, p.1) attempted to 'educate' two Aboriginal men, Arabanoo and Bennelong.(Bridges, 1968, p.46) The real intent was to 'civilise' both men.(Bridges, 1968, p.46) It was anticipated by Phillip that these men would be seen as role models to the other Aboriginal people in the 'colony'. At the same time the successful 'education' of Arabanoo and Bennelong was thought to symbolise his efforts to carry out his instructions and bestow what was perceived as the benefits of civilisation upon Aboriginal people. Bridges argues that this whole process of 'education' did nothing more than "metamorphose raw Aborigines".(Bridges, 1968, p.46)

Governor Phillip had supporters who believed that it was necessary to 'educate' or civilise Aborigines. His supporters were the early missionaries William Shelley, Reverend Marsden and Reverend Cartwright.(Bell, 1962; Bridges 1968, 1972) The missionaries and Phillip were agents for 'civilising' or 'educating' Aboriginal people.

3.2 Missionary Activity and Involvement: The First Schools

Various theories have been advanced to account for the low level of influence that missionaries had in the early colony.(Bell, 1968; Bridges, 1968, 1972) Some missionary activity was evident. In 1814 William Shelley, an English missionary, wrote to Governor Macquarie setting out proposals for the education of Aboriginal children. He emphasised the importance of group learning instead of trying to take individuals and 'educate' them. He emphasised the need "to relate the education, to civilising Aboriginal people, into earning a living and thereby fostering independence

through education".(Bridges, 1968, p.49) As a result of Shelley's suggestions a school was established for Aboriginal children at Parramatta by Governor Macquarie in 1815.(Bridges, 1968, pp.49-50) William Shelley was appointed as the manager. The school was a boarding school and 'parental consent' was necessary before children could attend the school. The school began its operations with six female and six male students ranging in age from four years to sixteen years. A year later in 1816 another such school was established in Liverpool and Reverend Cartwright appointed as the manager. This school had twelve girls and twelve boys. These schools produced at least one successful student in terms of learning non-Aboriginal curriculum. In 1819 a 14 year old Aboriginal student from the school at Parramatta took out the chief prize in the annual public examination.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.24) For the majority of Aboriginal students however, the lack of cultural relevance and context was detrimental to learning.

The content taught was culturally alien to Aboriginal students, as was the context it was placed within. The fact that all of the teaching was based on concepts of sin, prohibitions and punishments as defined in non-Aboriginal culture and society, removed it from an Aboriginal context. The concepts which formed the framework for the teaching were also culturally alien as was the conceptual approach to learning. The teachers themselves had no appreciation of the structures and sequences of teaching that Aboriginal people had. The students were taught "the alphabet from reading the Bible, the teaching lacked relevance to Aborigines and the doctrine was repulsive, based on sin, prohibitions and punishments. The teachings were hopelessly conceptual and the teachers believed that Aborigines had no religion, they were empty vessels".(Bridges, 1968, p.238)

On the whole neither of the schools were successful, and their continued operation appears to have been dependent on individuals' personalities and enthusiasm.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.24) After Macquarie was recalled the Native

Institution was moved from Parramatta to Blacktown. The committee managing the school was dismissed by Rev. Marsden in 1821 with Rev. Walker receiving the girls whilst the boys were moved to Liverpool and placed under Rev. Cartwright's care and instruction.(Bridges, 1972, p.232) Intestinal disease had killed all of the Aboriginal students at Liverpool by 1822. Brisbane closed the Institution at Blacktown in 1824. The school was re-opened in 1827 to merge Maori and Aboriginal students to instruct the boys in carpentry and the girls in needlework and spinning. Archdeacon Scott recommended 'a timetable exhaustingly unrealistic for children ... beginning at 6.00 am and finishing at 8.00 pm ... allowing 1 3/4 hours only for play and a meal'.(Bridges, 1972, p.232). The school closed in 1830. These schools were the first attempt at institutionalising Aboriginal people and grouping Aboriginal people for the purposes of 'education'. At the end of this period (1847) it is not surprising that the grounds were set for alienation, the subsequent periods up to the present day have only reinforced this.

The influential Reverend Samuel Marsden took Aboriginal people into his home during the 1820s for the stated purpose of educating them. He believed that it was necessary to civilise the Aborigine before Christianising them and thus educating them. His instruction consisted of waiting on tables, and reading from the Bible. Bridges argues that "Aborigines were very conscious of class [sic] distinction" and "what child of spirit would not resent being made a servant to the Marsden children ... Aborigines did not want to be educated as servants".(Bridges, 1968, p.229) Marsden blamed Aboriginal people for what he saw as their failure to become educated. As a result of his experiences he publicly and continuously claimed that "nothing could be done with the Aborigines".(Bridges, 1968, p.47) A sample of some of the early attitudes are expressed in Bell (1968, pp.117-118): "Aborigines were inherently incapable of being educated"; "Aborigines were mentally inferior"; "Aborigines could not be civilised". As a result, mission activity and schooling remained low key and the myth that

Aboriginal people could not be educated became an ingrained belief for most people, the official attitude reflecting this premise as well.

3.3 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and Public Education in NSW: 1848 to 1880

The next significant development was the establishment of the Board of National education in 1848. The Board of National Education was to administer public education in NSW. It was significant because it was the first effort to co-ordinate and develop education in NSW. The Board believed that it was "impractical to provide ... educational facilities for the blacks". It was a common assumption held by the majority of colonists that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could not learn, "Hence no Aboriginal children were enrolled during this period".(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.27)

After 1867, when the Board of National Education was disbanded, the Council of Education took over the administration of public education. The Council had no stated policy about the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.27) There was therefore no statement of exclusion of Aboriginal children from public education. The first known record of an Aboriginal child being enrolled at a public school is found during the 1870s.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.27)

By 1880 there were approximately 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children(2) enrolled in public schools throughout NSW.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.27) The type of education in these public schools still did not accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in terms of cultural need and did not reflect the strong cultural differences with regards to pedagogy. Another 1,800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school age children were not receiving any education at all.(Fletcher, 1973, p.2)

3.4 Separation and Exclusion: 1880 to 1909 - Separate Schools for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders

The era from 1880 to 1909 reflected a government policy of separation and exclusion. The Aborigines Protection Board was established in 1883 and this meant the creation of missions and reserves for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 1880 compulsory education for all children in NSW from the ages of five to 14 years was introduced. Miller asserts that the NSW Department of Public Instruction began a policy of racial segregation in government schools.(Miller, 1985, p.102) In 1883 non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents at Yass complained that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were a risk in health terms to their children. As a result the then Minister of Education, Mr George Reid, stated as policy that "no child whatever its creed or colour or circumstance ought to be excluded from a public school. But cases may arise, especially amongst the Aboriginal tribes, where admission of a child or children may be prejudicial to the whole school".(Harris, 1976, Part 1, p.28) As the prejudice was not clearly defined in the policy, this type of policy statement opened the flood gates to alternative interpretation: non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents succeeded in having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children excluded from school on what officially became incidents of uncleanliness. A report of the Aborigines Protection Board in 1892 sheds some light on the real reasons for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being excluded from school

... in a few places it has been found necessary to withdraw them, owing to objections taken by parents of European children, not that they were not clean or decently clad, but simply because they were Aboriginal children.(Miller, 1985, p.102)

The Department of Education was quick to kowtow to the wishes of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents. This was at the expense of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people developing the skills and knowledge necessary for survival in a rapidly changing world.

As more and more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children became excluded from public schools throughout NSW it became necessary to come up with an alternative. The Aborigines Protection Board maintained that where funds were available and where sufficient numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were excluded from public school, a separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school would be built. Once established these schools were staffed by untrained teachers. These teachers lacked the competence to teach in a non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context as well as in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context. By 1900, 13 separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools had been established in NSW.(Fletcher, 1973, p.4) The scene was set where educational resources and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were scarce and in controversial situations the Department of Education took sides, the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents' side.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.29) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students could be excluded from an education on the basis of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity alone. Harris asserts that:

the education of Aborigines was dependent on the attitudes of the local white community - the motives or attitudes were not always honourable or unprejudiced. The fact that they were Aborigines was enough.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.29)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could not help but shape negative attitudes of cynicism and suspicion towards non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. They lost either way because what education they did receive from the separate schools was culturally irrelevant and it was substandard.(Miller, 1985, p.103) As a result of their experience with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also developed negative attitudes towards themselves. A negative and subservient image of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was portrayed in the classroom by the teachers and through the curriculum.

3.5 The Protection Era: 1909 to 1936 - Reserve and Mission Schooling

The scene had been set and the situation worsened as the era of Protection dawned from 1909 to 1936. The Protection era reflected the thinking of the time, that eventually the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders would die out so why not make the extinction a little bit easier? "Smooth the dying pillow" became the constant catch phrase.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.27) "Protection was designed to keep Aborigines apart from non-Aboriginal people; protection from abuse and injustice".(Fletcher, 1973, p.5) Fletcher argues, however, that "segregation was the result of whites protecting themselves".(Fletcher, 1973, p.5)

The establishment of the Protection policy and segregation meant that the Aborigines Protection Board came into its own. No Act of Parliament existed to guide the Board in its operations. Missions and reserves became the norm not the exception. Reserve 'schooling' became the only form of education Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children could get. There were no trained teachers in these schools. Chicka Dixon, an Aboriginal 'educator' from the south coast of NSW gives a clear picture of school at Wallaga Lake during this era,

as far as school was concerned, in my estimation it was non-existent. In those days they advertised for a manager. At that particular time the shit-carter in Bega applied for the job. Automatically his wife became the school teacher. I recall that she was illiterate, always had a headache, so consequently there would be no formal schooling.(Miller, 1985, p.103)

Reserve or station schooling lacked continuity, conflicted with the teachings of the leaders, lacked relevance, was hopelessly conceptual and was nothing more than a collection of inconsistent, meaningless precepts.(Bridges, 1968, p.54) When educational opportunity was offered at all, it did not go beyond third class. The instruction when it existed consisted of arithmetic, manual and domestic work and a little singing in third class. Most of the students left school in first class.(Fletcher, 1973, p.6) Jimmy Barker sums up the educational experience of Aboriginal people at this time

During my lessons from these men I learnt that as I was black or partly coloured, there was no place for me in Australia ... it gave me the firm idea that an Aboriginal, even if he was only slightly coloured, was mentally and physically inferior to all others. As I was only twelve years old it was impossible to disbelieve men of authority who were much older.(Barker in Matthews, 1977, pp.56-57)

Third class was as high a level as an Aboriginal student could go.(Harris, 1978, Part 1, p.32) It is not surprising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, until very recently, have had the opportunity to prepare themselves for higher education, with third class being the highest level of attainment, open to them.

From 1910 the Aborigines Protection Board was responsible for taking what were classified as 'half-caste' children or children of lighter colour from their parents and putting them in homes, such as the Cootamundra girls home, Cootamundra, and Kinchela boys home, near Kempsey. There was a belief that children with lighter colouring had a greater chance of becoming educated or more aptly assimilated. Because they had white blood they were seen to have more intelligence than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of 'full-caste'.(Miller, 1985, p.93) It was the aim of the government of the time to civilise the young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the older more traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would simply die out. With them Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture would die out. The separation of the young from the rest of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the placing of the young under non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander control had very negative implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In separating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their parents the young were physically not available to the Aboriginal community to foster the growth of the economic and spiritual foundations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. An acute sense of loss of self-worth and "shaming"(3) became embedded in the psyche of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a result of the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander control. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural traditions were considered inferior to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were expected to adopt non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts, values and practices whilst having the practice of their own cultural traditions outlawed. The placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander control further created and developed a sense of negative dependency. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people no longer made decisions for themselves. The decisions were made for them by the management. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's lives were directed for them. They were as a result dependent on the directions which

enforced the adoption of a new set of cultural mores. The compounded effect of the above practices was to severely weaken Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and social structures.

The missionaries were at this time becoming more active and a larger number of missions were established under many different denominations such as Catholic, United Church, Salvation Army etc. The Aborigines Protection Board had no legal control over the missions. Mrs Jean Begg said of life at Bomaderry home on the south coast of NSW, run by the United Aborigines mission

that the home was dominated by religion. We were cut off from the rest of the world ... We were also brought up to think that Aborigines were dirty and bad ... the kind of discipline was, as I said, fear ... Besides that kind of religious fear, I had fear of Aborigines, knowing that they were evil, wicked and not understanding black, but only relating it to sin and drinking and cruelty.(Miller, 1985, pp.161-162)

Jimmy Miller's mother sums up the main aim of the homes thus:

They were making us white - think white - look white - act white.(Miller, 1985, p.163)

Quite a few authors, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (Evans, 1975; Miller, 1985; Reynolds, 1982, 1987; Rowley, 1970, 1971; and Willmot, 1988) have today shed light on the devastating effects of this era on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally as part of Australia's history. Rueben Kelly offers some insight into the effects of education on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This type of whiteman's education was: 'an agonising rearrangement that Aboriginal people were forced to take. They never taught us to read or write or do maths. Deprocess and brainwash us - put a nation out of mind' was their aim ...'Going to a whiteman's school put me a step backward not forward'.(Kelly, 1988)

In this context it is not difficult to imagine how negative attitudes towards non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools were developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

3.6 Assimilation: 1936 to 1965 - Integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children into Public Schools

Assimilation became the policy of the day from 1936 to 1965 (Directorate of Special Programs, 1981, p.9). It was during this time that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people began to make public their complaints about their abominable treatment. Australia's sesquicentennial celebrations on Australia Day, January 26 1938, became The Day of Mourning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Australia began to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people organising themselves and developing varying levels of support from a range of different groups in the community, including housewife groups and labour organisations.

In 1940 the Aborigines Welfare Board replaced the Aborigines Protection Board. The responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was transferred to the Department of Education. The Department of Education took control of reserve school buildings and began sporadically to provide trained teachers for these schools. There was the desire from within the Department to maintain segregated

education facilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children even with the change of policy.

It is desirable that where a number of Aboriginal [sic] children are attending the school they should be segregated from the ordinary school pupils and provided with education in a school set apart for the purpose preferably at an Aboriginal settlement. I am of the opinion that the policy of this department should at all times have due regard to the underlying theory that because the children of marked Aboriginal characteristics and parents of Aboriginal blood belong to a child race, their exclusion from any school should be authorised not because they are an offence to the white people or to the white children, but that in their own interests they might receive a suitable training under conditions which are conducive to their highest welfare.(Miller, 1985, p.178, as spoken by Mr Drummond, Minister of Education, 1937)

We now see a climate of tension, conflict and ambivalence where some people in the bureaucracy as well as in the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community want segregation of education maintained but a broader government aim of assimilation exists. The Education Department realised that they had to try to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children into non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public schools.(Fletcher, 1975, p.8) Unfortunately many non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities fiercely resisted all attempts at integration.(Fletcher, 1975, p.8)

Fletcher (1975) details a sequence of events at Collarenebri in the north-west of NSW where in the attempts to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children into the public school over a period of eleven years, we see a scenario of racism, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protest through public meetings and the collection of petitions, and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents withdrawing their children from school because of the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. One solution to the 'problem' was the establishment of an annexe for the

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on 7 February 1941. As the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students moved out the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents re-enrolled their children. The annexe initially had a trained teacher but this did not last for very long. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were back to receiving second rate education. By November 1946 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents began to play the political game as well; they petitioned the Department of Education to allow their children to attend the main school. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were back to having to produce medical certificates to gain access to public schools from 1946 to 1948. Individuals were able to seek permission to be able to attend public schools but this had the effect of dividing families and communities. Fletcher states "that a higher class of Aborigine emerged in the attempt to get their children into schools".(Fletcher, 1975, p.6) He discusses the friction that developed between town and camp Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in particular. He also cites an incident where in one family the fair-skinned Aboriginal children were accepted into the school and the darker skinned stepson was excluded. It became necessary for "children of any aborigine [sic] securing an exemption certificate to be admitted to public schools".(Harris, 1978, Part 2, p.24)

In 1951 the annexe was closed and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were integrated into the public school. But at what cost to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? Fletcher argues that the real issue at Collarenebri, as was the case with other country towns in NSW, was not health, as was argued by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parent protesters as the issue; it was the fear of intermarriage.(Fletcher, 1975, p.8) One could argue that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were excluded from the basic right to an education because Australians were racist. They feared that in some way their children would be tainted. The Collarenebri experience has been documented in other places throughout the state. North Lismore is another well documented case where 22 Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander children were excluded from the public school in 1944 for much the same reasons.(Harris, 1978, Part 2, p.28)

Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children during the era of Assimilation was characterised in sum by conflict, tension and the racism of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must have had their already developed fears of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education reinforced. Their sense of self worth could only have been denigrated further.

This lack of access to schooling has had profound effects on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in education in the more recent years in Australia at all levels. It is clear that exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from public schools and segregation into mission schools has meant that few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had access to primary and secondary schooling, the foundation blocks for participation in higher education as students.

Even fewer Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders had had experiences or visions of being members of tertiary academic staff.

3.7 Integration: 1965 to 1972 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Activism and Changing Perceptions of the Value of Schooling

Change in Government policy in 1965 saw the introduction of the notion and policy of Integration. In 1967 the Commonwealth Government held a referendum which gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the right to vote and the right to citizenship in Australia. Until this period Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders had no right to citizenship. The development of high profile public protest and organisation was an important feature of the era of Integration. The Aboriginal Tent Embassy set up

in 1971 on Parliament House lawns in Canberra gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people an international audience for the first time. The creation of the Aboriginal flag as a result of the Tent Embassy movement brought Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people together under a united banner. We developed a united force of strength to fight for citizenship, and access to public facilities such as swimming pools and restaurants etc. The Freedom Ride that Charles Perkins (until recently the head of D.A.A.) initiated throughout the western towns of NSW forced radical change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Gaining access to public swimming pools and RSL clubs were a couple of the changed circumstances resulting from the Freedom Rides. This activism by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people indicated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were no longer going to accept third rate citizenship, having just achieved that. As a direct result of this struggle the Commonwealth Government in 1970 initiated 'ABSEG' to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students beyond school leaving age to continue their studies at the higher education level.

The relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and education during this era was characterised by truancy, poor participation and retention rates. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance in education was not unlike that of previous eras where the system was characterised also by its assimilationist curriculum and pedagogy. What was perhaps a different characteristic to previous eras was a resurgence of pride and self-esteem as a result of the public activism by what was seen to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership with a national focus. The incessant attempts by the Australian governments to assimilate and exterminate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had not been totally successful. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were now beginning to see a need for education and were finally gaining some degree of access to education.

3.8 Policy of Self-Determination 1972 Onwards: Significant Developments in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation in the Education System

Self-determination and self-management became Commonwealth government policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 1972. "Self-determination and self-management as policies recognise the validity of Aboriginal culture and the importance of Aboriginal control over, and responsibility for, programs designed to meet their needs".(Ruddock, 1985, p.27)

There have been many significant developments by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since 1972. Amongst these the establishment of the NSW Aboriginal Consultative Group in 1976, a group of Aboriginal people working in a voluntary capacity to advise the Minister of Education on all matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in NSW. In 1977 the establishment of the National Aboriginal Education Committee gave advice to the Minister of Education at a national level. As a result of these developments the specific cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in schools, and adults in higher education were being diagnosed. Solutions were being pondered and remedies enacted. Remedies such as the employment of Aboriginal Education Assistants in schools, in-service of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers, the development of the Aboriginal Education Policy (Directorate of Special Programs 1981) by the newly established Aboriginal Education Unit in the NSW Ministry of Education and the development of curriculum resources that reflected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogical styles as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge, which were also designed to add perspectives to units already taught at school, to mention only a few.

In the 1970s there were two significant developments which helped to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in schools. The first, in 1972, was the withdrawal from the Teachers' Handbook by the State government of the regulation that gave principals the right to refuse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children into their school.(Harris, 1978, Part 2, p.26). The regulation was withdrawn as a reaction, by teacher unions and members of the community, to a letter from a Mr Baird condemning such policy (Harris, 1978, Part 2, p.26). Reform was therefore not only the result of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy. The second development was the introduction of the Aboriginal Secondary Assistance Scheme (ABSEG), which was designed to encourage Aboriginal children to attend school, by providing financial assistance to the children's families.

The 1970s was clearly an era of reform. It must be emphasised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children did not have complete access to public schooling until this time. Miller argues that technically the segregation of public schools did not end until 1970. "It was not until the 1950s that the Education Department took over the mission school and staffed them with trained teachers and it was not until the late 1960s that the Department began to close down the mission schools".(Miller, 1985, p.200)

He goes on to say that segregation still exists for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the form of graded classes, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are kept together in the lower grades, apart from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. "This was still segregation, but now it was within the school".(Miller, 1985, p.200)

Teachers, the transformers of knowledge were seen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents in the 1970s as "just another example of white authority figures who had dominated the Koori lives so harshly in the past".(Miller, 1985, p.201)

The 1970s are characterised by expressions of resentment, anger and fear towards schooling by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents (Miller, 1985, p.201). There was tension, racism and a fair degree of insensitivity within the school environment. There can be no doubt that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are only recent participants in a schooling system that in the past has failed to meet our needs and in fact has been instrumental in weakening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values and practices.

3.9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation in NSW School - A Current Profile

The overall picture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in schools throughout NSW in the 1980s is by no means a glamorous picture. The following tables should give the reader an overview of the situation as well as an insight into the major issues.

A 1976 survey (Figure 3.2) indicates that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW (55%) come from an urban dispersed background, with 35% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population coming from an urban background and only 10% coming from rural non-traditional backgrounds. No Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW in 1976 were classified as living a traditional lifestyle. The 1986 census data (Table 3.1) indicates the same patterns but to different degrees. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW exist in a transformed culture, one that has evolved as a result of government policies of protection, segregation, assimilation and integration. Colonisation and the advent of missions prohibited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to our traditional languages and to our traditions by law. The advent and implementation of such policies forced people to disband their own cultural traditions in favour of learning the new cultural behaviours.

SOCIO - GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDIGENOUS SCHOOL
POPULATION IN NSW - 1976

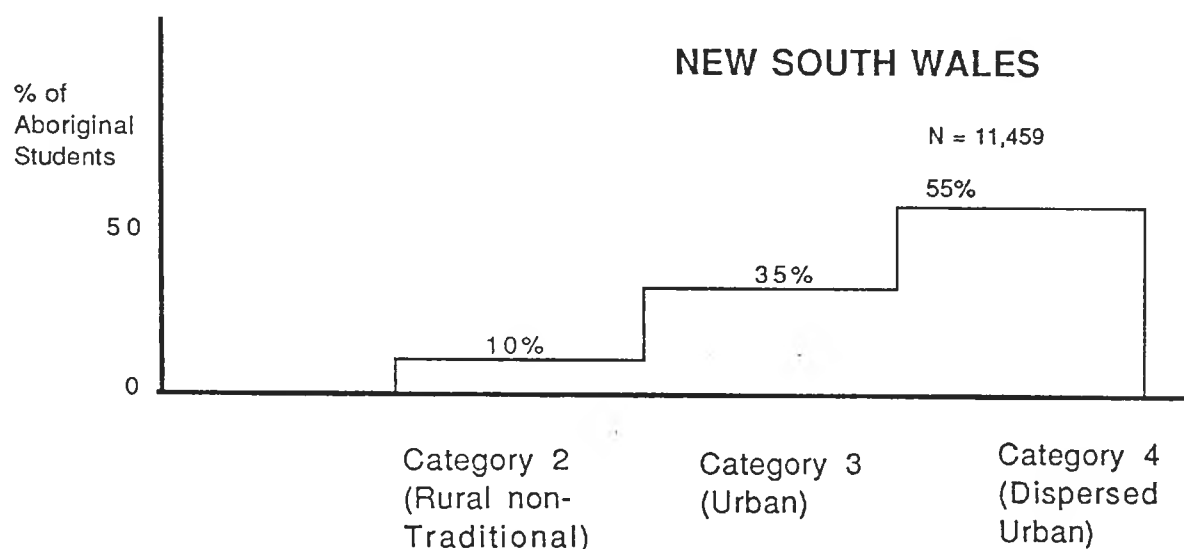


Figure 3.2

Categories Defined:

Category 2 - Rural Non-Traditional - Aboriginal people who have considerable social and geographic separation from the rest of Australian society but are not traditionally oriented.

Category 3 - Urban - These people are highly geographically and economically embedded in non-Aboriginal society but because of their community social organisation they have considerable separation.

Category 4 - Dispersed Urban - This group is highly socially, economically and geographically embedded in the non-indigenous Australian society.

Source: Funding Priorities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Education, Canberra, July 1984, p. 5 and p.3.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION
DISTRIBUTION IN NSW BY RURAL/ URBAN DISTRIBUTION
- 1986

Category	Numbers of population	Percentage population
Major urban population. More than 100,000 people	21,416	36.3
Other urban cities and towns with between 1,000 to 99,999 people	27,352	46.0
Rural	3,075	5.2
Rural/migratory	7,168	12.1
TOTAL	59,011	100

Table 3.1

Source: Census of Population June, 1986,
Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Table 3.2 indicates that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (44.5%) attend State schools as opposed to 3.5% attending Catholic schools, 1.0% attending private schools and 1.0% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED BY YEAR 12 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES
STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS RESPONDING TO THE A.E.C.G. SURVEY
AUGUST 1985

Type of School	Numbers	% of Total
State	44.5	89
Catholic	3.5	7
Private	1.0	2
TAFE Colleges	1.0	2
Other	-	-
TOTAL	50.0	100

Table 3.2

Source: Cavanagh, P., 'Aboriginal Students and the 1984 Higher School Certificate in NSW', NSWAECS, Sydney, 1985, p.2

people attending TAFE colleges in August 1985.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are currently gravitating toward State schools rather than to religious schools. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of public schools were ones that reflected exclusion and inferior learning. Experiences with the religious schools reflected not only inferior learning but a determined effort to denigrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the eyes of the church, could reach their salvation.(Miller, 1985, p.120) The requirement to pay fees to attend most religious schools was a further factor discouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from sending their children to these schools. The current gravitation toward State schools may be seen to be the better option of the two systems because the state schools in the past were less dogmatic and less obvious in their attempts to de-Aboriginalise people.(4)

A recent study (Cavanagh, 1986) indicates that the enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Year 7 increased by 75% from 1973 to 1980. There was, however, no substantial increase in retention rates in Year 12. The reasons for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students being "pushed out" (Morgan, 1988) of school have been identified in a number of research papers and surveys and have become a major issue of concern.(Cavanagh, 1985, 1986; Coopers & Lybrand, 1987; Watts, 1976, 1980) For the purposes of this paper these statistics indicate that as so few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are completing Year 12 and gaining their Higher School Certificates, their access to higher education is again severely limited. Table 3.3 indicates the performance level that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 12 were attaining in 1984 and in 1985. The majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students performed in the lowest percentile with the average aggregate in both years being very low. Table 3.4 highlights the difference in performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander students in 1984 and 1985. Again the relative levels in performance are depressingly disparate. The NSW AECG, realising the tragic situation, conducted research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' performances at the HSC level as well as assessed needs of these students during 1986 and 1987.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE
LEVELS IN THE HSC 1984 AND 1985

Year	Number of Students Enrolled Yr 12	Average Aggregate	Percentage Achieving <25 Percentile Aggregate	Percentage Achieving >50 Percentile Aggregate
1984	98	159	75%	15%
1985	111	156	71%	6%

Table 3.3

MALE AND FEMALE AVERAGE MARKS FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER AND NON-ABORIGINAL CANDIDATES FOR THE 1985 HSC

	ABORIGINAL	NON-ABORIGINAL
Total Group	156	254
Female Candidates	165	255
Male Candidates	144	253

Table 3.4

Source: "Improving Aboriginal Performance in NSW HSC", Pat Cavanagh, 1986, p.8.

In 1986 the NSW Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs and the NSWAECC commissioned a consulting company, Coopers and Lybrand W.D. Scott to conduct research and determine the factors which have contributed to the educational achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 11 and 12. A report was released in 1987. Interestingly enough the profile of the successful and achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student was the profile of an atypical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. It was generally a female student with high self-esteem who aspires to a high level of education, as their chosen profession requires a high level of education. She has sought vocational and careers guidance through the school and has had helpful teachers and mothers. Generally she has participated in extra curricula activities that the school organises and most of her friends are still at school. The transition from primary school to high school has presented no real problems in maths or english. She is able to work undisturbed at home and both parents are employed. She does not tend to identify with either parent's occupation. Her parents have high expectations of her. School was an environment that this student liked and generally she had positive relationships with her teachers. Tutoring was something that she took advantage of. The successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student tended to attend schools where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students formed a low proportion of the total school population and racism and discrimination were not issues in these schools.(Coopers and Lybrand W.D. Scott, 1987, pp.78-80)

The profile of the successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school student is one where cultural identity and cultural differences have been submerged. If the existing structures of schooling in NSW aim to assimilate and in fact de-Aboriginalise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, then this profile does measure success. Success being defined in terms of developing non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander skills and knowledge as well as ensuring de-Aboriginalisation of

the student. The desire of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for increased participation in education includes the rider "retain an intact and indeed growing culture".(Blair, 1988) Therefore this profile is heralding a warning for a careful assessment of the terms of participation.

In conclusion, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had limited access to schooling from 1788 to the 1980s. From the outset the intent of schooling was tainted with the notion of assimilation. The form that the schooling took from 1788 varied from segregated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission schools to segregated schooling within the public system. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy in the 1970s and 1980s coupled with a more enlightened Government policy of self-determination and self-management saw reform and increased participation in the system by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Though Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were attending school in greater numbers for longer periods of time, they were still being streamed in lower, almost segregated classes, and retention rates beyond Years 9 and 10 remain unacceptably low. Although the desire for schooling exists amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, this is still coupled with cynicism and suspicion about the benefits. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people constantly express, through conference and meeting forums, the need for culturally relevant education; education that strengthens not denigrates or compromises a child's Aboriginality.(5)

Chapter Notes

1. Board: refers to the Aborigines Protection Board which was operational in New South Wales from 1883. The Board was responsible for the management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

2. From 1880 onwards the extent of Torres Strait Islander participation on the mainland is unclear. The term is used where appropriate so as not to exclude Torres Strait Islander people.

3. 'Shaming': no English words aptly define this term. The closest meaning could be equated to a sense of embarrassment and humility. A common expression in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander English with many implied and understood non-verbal messages.

4. De-Aboriginalise: the process whereby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are inclined to feel that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts and beliefs are substandard. A process of degrading and separating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values and beliefs from others. This process may lead to a denial of one's Aboriginality.

5. Aboriginality: an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's sense of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.

CHAPTER FOUR

ABORIGINES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN NSW: POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND APPROACHES

Aboriginal people are not well served by the Australian education system. At all levels, from pre-school to tertiary, the structures and processes of education generally are inappropriate and give little recognition to the needs and aspirations of Aborigines.(NAEC, 1986, p.7)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have not been well served by the schooling system in NSW. A review in the third chapter clearly indicates that the schooling system has failed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the last two centuries. The schooling and higher education systems of education are inextricably linked. People's experiences of school have had impact on their perceptions and on both their willingness and accessibility to experience higher education. This chapter presents an overview of policies and programs aiming at increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in the decades of the 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s. It was not until these decades that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experienced much of the higher education sector. The chapter also highlights some initiatives developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to increase access and participation. A profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff actual participation in higher education in NSW, until 1988, completes in the following chapter, the picture of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have experienced higher education.

4.1 The Initiation of Change in the 1960s - From Assimilation to Integration

Willmot asserts that a new breed of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educationist has emerged over the last three decades.(Willmot, 1986, pp.14-15) They are people who have had access to "acquiring a considerable degree of European education" and who focus their energies on developmental educational ideals, and on being instrumental in bringing pressure to "bear upon educational authorities to establish programs".(Willmot, 1986, pp.14-15) These educationists have emerged as a result of three processes; the initiation of change in the 1960s, reconstruction in the 1970s and a stand-off in the 1980s.(Willmot, 1986, pp.16-22) These processes as they impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education, will be the focus for the overview presented in this chapter.

The initiation of change in the 1960s occurred within the context of changed government policy toward Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; from Assimilation to Integration. That is, a change from absorption and devaluing of cultural values and ideals, to one of a blending or at least valuing of some. Willmot states that there were four linked events which formed the "springboards of change in Australia, and gave rise to the beginning of modern Australian Aboriginal politics".(Willmot, 1986, p.13) The first of these changes was the formation of the Federal Council for Associations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI). This organisation was according to Willmot the "springboard for the formation of the modern Aboriginal organisation".(Willmot, 1986, p.13) The second event was when the Guriniji people of Wave Hill in the Northern Territory walked out of the cattle station to their home - Wattie Creek. They were demanding their own land. The Freedom Rides throughout NSW initiated by Charles Perkins, an Aboriginal graduate from the University of Sydney, raised people's consciousness and opened some doors previously inaccessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Fourthly, the 1967 referendum gave

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people citizenship, and the Commonwealth, legislative responsibilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.(Willmot, 1986, p.13)

In the context of higher education the first two known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people graduated in the 1950s and 1960s in NSW (Figure 6.2). The introduction of 'ABSTUDY' in 1969 by the Commonwealth Government gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people financial incentive to enrol in higher education courses. It gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the economic base for innovations in education. This development is an indication of the Commonwealth Government's recognition of the stark under-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education. Academics became more prolific in their research endeavours about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures in the three decades of assimilation. Watson asserts that these early efforts by academics were a "mixture of recording Aboriginal Islander customs and language before they disappeared; providing a basis for the control and manipulation of Aboriginal people, the exploitation of their labour, their removal from land wanted for agriculture and mining and accelerating the process of assimilation".(Watson, 1988, p.4) She goes on to say that "many of these early studies are characterised by superficiality, paternalism, racism, a preoccupation with people's sexual life and a desire to confirm theories of Social Darwinism".(Watson, 1988, p.4) Overall then, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the higher education sector in the 1960s was limited to being researched by academics, and minimal student participation. It was a decade initiating change in the higher education sector as well as in the development of modern Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander politics. Politics cannot be divorced from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

4.2 1970s - The Decade of Response and Reconstruction

Willmot refers to the 1970s as a 'Decade of Response'; "one in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people responded to the new environment in which they found themselves".(Willmot, 1986, p.14) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were grouping and focusing their energies on land rights issues, socio-economic issues, health issues and education issues. The new breed of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educationists present themselves as a function of this grouping and three ideological camps emerge: the Integrationists, the Evolutionists and the Separatists.(Willmot, 1986, pp.23-24) The Integrationists feel the desire to integrate into mainstream education systems. The Evolutionists support strategic separatism and recognise that what exists today is a new part of the society, a part that never existed before. "This element in the society has evolved in response to the challenges and difficulties that society faces, and is made possible by education."(Willmot, 1986, p.24) The Evolutionists purport that separatism ought to be practised in order to overcome certain system problems, or else students ought to reach a level of competence in dealing with the other system.(Willmot, 1986, p.24) There is a fine line of distinction between the Integrationists and the Evolutionists. The final camp, the Separatists argue for independent education, separate systems and separate tertiary institutions.(Willmot, 1986, pp.23-24)

Within the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, then, such diversity of beliefs led to great reconstruction in the 1970s. Until 1972 the context for this reconstruction was within the broader Commonwealth government policies of Integration and from 1972 Self-determination and Self-management.(1) A number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and committees emerge at both a national and state level that begin to publicly establish needs and strategies for reform in the education arena. In 1973 the NSW Department of Education established an

Aboriginal Education Unit to service schools within its jurisdiction. In 1977 the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSWAECG) was established to advise the Minister of Education on all matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. This group of voluntary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people ensured that an important communication network between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the state government was effectively put into place. A year later the National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC) was established as a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice to government and policy makers.

In articulating the educational needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, these structures prioritise the need for greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education and develop a number of strategies that aim to address the need. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were beginning to reconstruct educational experiences in the 1970s through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation and resultant strategy development.

4.2.1 Special Programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders- The creation of Special Programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wishing to enrol in courses in higher education centres was a very significant strategy. Special Programs are courses or programs designed specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to overcome deficits in educational background, to accommodate cultural variations; including the sense of geographic and emotional isolation from family and community experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to overcome and offer support against racism, and to address the inappropriate use of inaccurate course content as well as inappropriate teaching and learning strategies.

Enclaves are special programs. The term enclave has been defined by many.(NAEC, 1984, p.67; CDE Access Survey, 1980, p.38; Ruddock, 1985, p.47) Simply stated an "enclave" is "where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in courses within institutions are given additional support appropriate to their culture, lifestyles and educational background".(NAEC, 1984, p.68) Enclaves essentially were designed to offer a separate area where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students could comfortably seek academic support, personal support and an environment that promotes a positive sense of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. Enclaves also negotiate special entry or special admission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to higher education centres.

The first enclave was established at the South Australian Institute of Technology in South Australia in 1974. Mt Lawley College and the Western Australian Institute of Technology in Western Australia established enclaves next in 1976. James Cook University in Queensland followed closely with the development of the fourth enclave, and the South Australian College of Advanced Education, South Australia, established an enclave in 1978.(NAEC, 1984, p.71) In New South Wales the first enclaves were not established until 1982; Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, Milperra, in 1983; Mitchell College of Advanced Education, Bathurst, and Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education, Lismore.

Special Admission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to higher education centres was established as a special programme accompanying the establishment of enclaves. | Special Admission is based on an affirmative action and positive discriminatory principle which allows admissions of persons to a course:

- a) for which they do not have the pre-requisite education standard
- b) for which they have the education pre-requisite standard but to which they would not normally have gained entry because of the higher education centre

quota restrictions (in this case quota regulations would be waived in view of a person's Aboriginality).(CDE, 1980, p.9)

Ideally, then, the development of enclaves and Special Admission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students improved access to higher education and provided support for students once enrolled in courses. It also created an environment in which to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Willmot asserts that enclave systems, including the use of special admission, were established by the Integrationists and Evolutionists.(Willmot, 1986, p.24) They created structures designed to meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs and to encourage participation and success within the already established higher education structures.

Special courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those designed to cater for different cultural needs in terms of content, mode and pedagogy, fall within the category of Special Programs. The first of these courses in NSW was the Aboriginal Teaching Assistants' Training Program (ATAP) conducted through the University of Sydney from 1975. The development of special courses has been a feature of the 1980s.

4.2.2 Establishment of a Target - An additional strategy was the establishment of a target to train 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers by the year 1990, established in 1979 by the NAEC. The creation of this target focused Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's attention on two goals; firstly, increasing the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education centres to meet State(2) and national targets. Secondly, on the field of teacher education. The early special programs in NSW evolved around this target. Higher education centres were encouraged to develop special programs as the Commonwealth government acknowledged the importance of this target and allocated additional funds for the development of programs that aimed to address the target. The introduction of a

funding factor has confused the fundamental aims and principles. It has been the personal experience of the author that some higher education centres' motives for the establishment of Special Programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were politically and financially inspired rather than educationally inspired.

4.2.3 A Broadened Economic Base- The development of ABSTUDY in 1970 and the National Employment and Training Scheme (NEATS) in 1978 broadened the economic base for educational initiatives. Abstudy was designed to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to stay longer in secondary school thereby developing the skills for higher education. NEATS was developed to provide a degree of financial independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wishing to study at the higher education level.

Overall then, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in the 1970s was inspired by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation and resultant strategy development and implementation. It certainly was a decade of response and reconstruction.

4.3 1980s - A Stand-Off

Willmot asserts that a 'stand-off' occurs nationally in the 1980s, within a context of Self-determination and Self-management policy.(Willmot, 1986, p.22) It is in this decade, however, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in NSW has dramatically increased.(See Figures 5.2 and 5.3) The next chapter will focus more specifically on developments in the 1980s. Suffice to say here that not only is the question of increased participation being addressed in the 1980s but the quality of that participation has become a major new focus. Watson believes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education from the outset has been on non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms.(Watson, 1988,

pp.5-6) The quality of participation must hinge on the terms of that participation. Watson argues that non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics have defined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through their academic research, and continue to do so using "Western concepts, categories and definitions - that is - white terms of reference".(Watson, 1988, p.4) Academic stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures have possibly aggravated the serious attitude problems that a majority of Australians have towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. Some in the academic environment until recently have not held any perception that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have "intelligence" and motivation enough to participate in higher education.(Watson, 1988, p.4) Higher education centres until recently have been acting as agents accelerating the assimilationist policies of the 1960s. The terms of reference that emanate from such a background are in need of reassessment if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are to experience a quality of participation. This reassessment must be equally done by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and higher education communities.

It has been the experience of the author that the developments associated with Special Programs have meant a fair degree of reassessment for higher education centres. A reassessment in terms of meeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs: the extensive provision of off-campus studies, the development of award courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paraprofessionals, the development of bridging courses and modification of existing admission policies and practices have been a few of the readjustments made in the reassessment of terms. On the basis of indications reviewed in this study there seems to be a need for further on-going evaluation.

4.4 Conclusion

Over the last three decades Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educationists have emerged from an environment where enormous change has occurred. In the 1960s the foundations for modern Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander politics were laid through the formation of FCAATSI, Wave Hill Walk Out, the Freedom Rides throughout NSW and the 1967 referendum giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the right to citizenship in Australia. The Commonwealth government policy of assimilation had changed as did the philosophy inherent in such legislation. Self management and self determination was now the operational Commonwealth policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rather than one of dependency. At this point in time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had no focus on higher education. Only two of them had graduated in NSW. The only other "contact" with higher education by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was as victims of patronising, often racist academic research. The 1970s was a decade of reconstruction where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were organising themselves into advocacy groups. One such group focused on education. Access to higher education, particularly in the field of teacher education became a priority of State and National bodies. The establishment of Special Programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders was a national feature of the 1970s. As a result Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people began to enrol in centres and find employment in the administration of such programs. This growth did not occur in NSW until the 1980s. The 1980s is proving to be a period of dramatic change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in higher education throughout NSW. Participation rates have increased dramatically but so too have the attrition rates. A new set of needs with the focus being switched from increasing participation to the quality and outcome of this participation have emerged as a result of experience in this sector.

Chapter Notes

1. For a definition of Self-management and Self-determination refer to page 37 earlier in this study.
2. The target for NSW established by the percentage of the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is 269.

CHAPTER FIVE

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN NSW: PARTICIPATION - 1951-1988

Between 1950 and 1978 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attended higher education centres in small numbers (see Figure 5.3). They enrolled in courses that were primarily in the 'helping professions', teacher education, welfare, law and the social sciences (see Table 5.2). Out of these enrolments only five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people graduated in New South Wales. In the 1980s the creation of Special Programs produced larger numbers of students. These students formed support groups for themselves within mainstream courses, and within those specially designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, such as the Aboriginal Rural Education Program which operates at Macarthur Institute of Higher Education. The focus developed around Aboriginal Support Units. To service these units Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were employed. Discussions at early enclave conferences (Mitchell CAE 1983, Wollongong University 1984) indicated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were employed within these Units initially in administrative and counselling roles.

With time and experience greater diversity became evident in the fields of study in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were choosing to enrol. Primarily the management, technical and business fields. Even larger groups of students were enrolling and becoming very visible on higher education campuses. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education was developing a very high profile across most higher

education centres in the state. The larger numbers of students were creating some new areas of concern. The issue of student selection was one such concern. Centres initially tended to operate an open door policy. Rapidly increasing numbers and attrition rates have forced discussion about student selection. Some people in the field are concerned about "setting people up for yet another experience of failure" if they do not have the skills to cope with higher education, and there are the more practical issues of 100 applicants for a course with 40 places. Others are concerned that selection introduces elitism and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values. Greater experience within the higher education centres has introduced some stark cultural differences. As a result new courses have and continue to be designed that try to account for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs and which reflect cultural differences. Cumberland College of Health Sciences and the Catholic College of Education Sydney, are two centres that have developed such courses. A redefinition and redesigning of the "terms of reference" (Watson, 1988, p.9) is occurring.

Other developments integral to this profile include the higher status that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are having in the centres. Staffing roles have become more diverse and complex, and management oriented. Courses are being developed in Aboriginal Studies, Aboriginal Education, and Aboriginal Health for all students to take. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are being developed and added to a wide range of courses across faculties or schools. The sensitisation process of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students is an important by-product of such curriculum development. This activity and growth has accompanied an increased pool of external Commonwealth government funds. The issue of funding as was indicated in the fourth chapter is very much a part of this profile, so much so that some units within centres are embarking on entrepreneurial activities to raise funds and develop a certain degree of financial independence: Sydney CAE for example. Overall, time and experience have led to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education within higher education centres developing a much higher

profile and an identity that is unique. This chapter explores some of the issues and features of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student participation within the context of higher education.

Demographic information provides some insight into patterns for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation. NSW has 22.2% of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia.(Census, 1986) This is 1.1% of the total NSW population (see Table 3.1).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of NSW is a very youthful population with the greatest percentage of the population (53.2%) being between one to 19 years old (Figure 5.1). In the very near future larger numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be placing demands on all levels of the educational system. School leavers will replace mature age people as those entering higher education centres. Given the different educational experience of the two groups, the demand and the needs of our youth are likely to be different.

Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educationists have argued that higher education is geographically inaccessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people because the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in rural areas where higher education centres do not exist. However, the census data reveal that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in urban dispersed areas where at least ten higher education centres exist - most of these being in relatively close proximity to each other (see Table 3.1). The exception to this is in the western and south-western suburbs of Sydney where only three higher education centres exist at a fair distance from each other and from the established areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are living and resettling in. The majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the southern and south-western suburbs have argued in consultative group forums and general community meetings that higher

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AGE DISTRIBUTION IN
NSW:1986

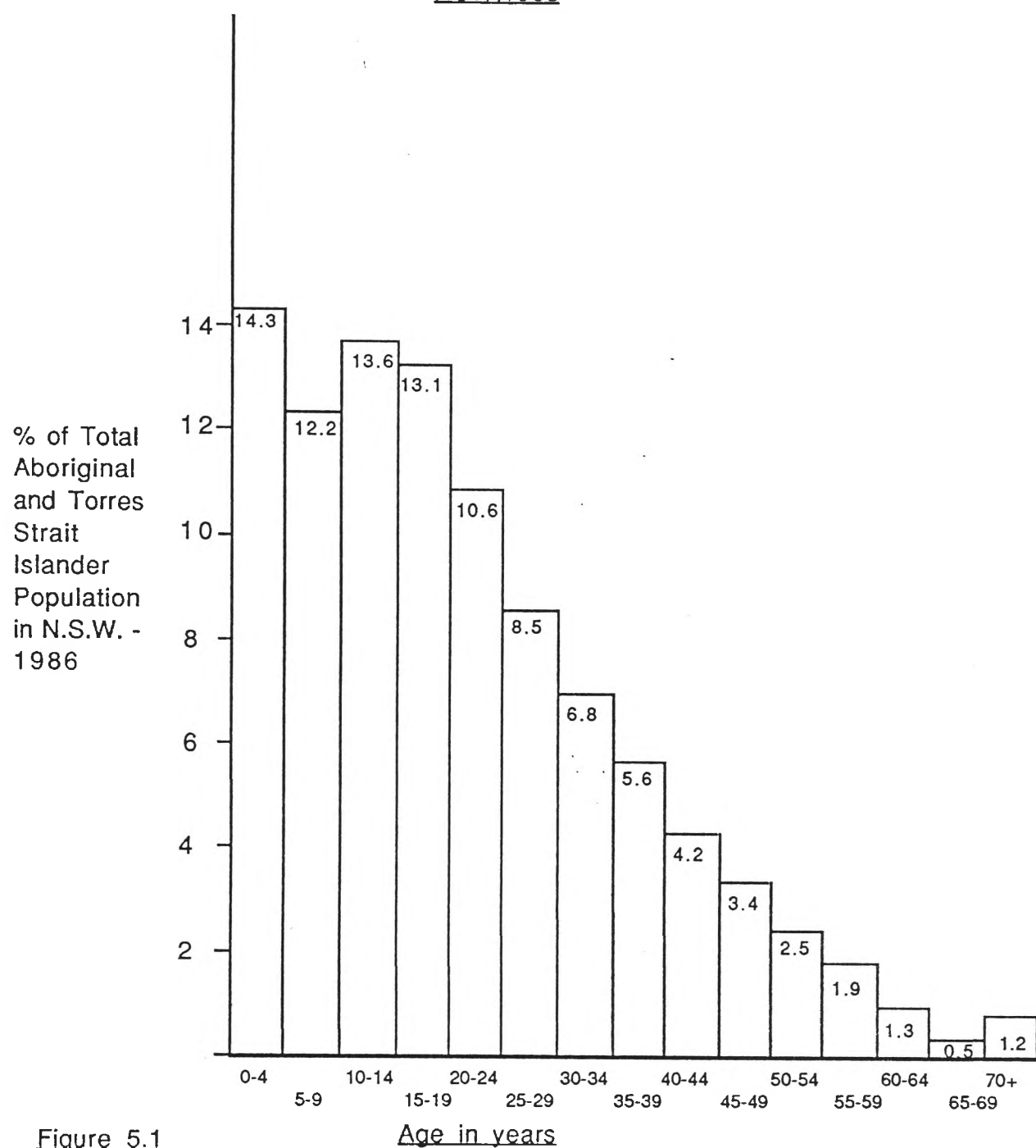


Figure 5.1

Source: Census of Population, June 1986,
Australian Bureau of Statistics.

education is not perceived as being geographically accessible to them. The lack of access to higher education because of residential location is a factor in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation but it is clearly not one of the key issues. Other reasons must therefore be important in determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education..

The remainder of this chapter will examine some of these possible other reasons, through an analysis of actual participation and graduation rates, the fields of study being undertaken, special programs developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the cultural appropriateness of courses involved in and the racism encountered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

5.1 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student

5.1.1 Numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enrolments and Graduands to 1988 - Prior to 1971 there were only three known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who graduated from higher education courses in NSW (Figure 5.2). Between 1971 and 1978 there were slight fluctuations and decreases in the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people graduating (from two students in 1972 to five in 1975, four in 1976, ten in 1977 and eight in 1978). Between 1978 and 1980 the increase to 25 graduates is a significant one. There follows a series of ebb and flow until 1984. The increase in the number of graduates from 1984 and in particular in 1986 is dramatic. This latter year is important because the first enclave in NSW was established in 1982. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students entered mainstream courses at Macarthur Institute after some had completed a bridging course in 1983. There was anticipation that students participating in the higher education centres with enclaves would, in the normal course of events, graduate between 1985 and 1987, this being dependent on the type of course the student had undertaken, for example, two years for a full-time Associate Diploma, three

years for a Bachelor Degree and so on. From the numbers graduating from 1985 it would appear that, to a certain extent, the creation of the enclaves had a significant impact on successful higher education participation (Figure 5.3) and completion (Figures 5.2, 5.3).

To produce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates there must be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enrolling in higher education centres. In New South Wales, prior to the establishment of the three main enclaves (1982, 1983), the greatest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enrol in higher education centres in any one year was 140 in 1981 (Figure 5.3). After the establishment of the enclaves in New South Wales the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enrolling in centres increased to 204 in 1983 and as much as 1541 in 1986.

In 1983 54% of all of these students were enrolled in higher education centres where the three enclaves existed; at Mitchell CAE, Northern Rivers CAE and Macarthur Institute of Higher Education. The remaining 46% were scattered through 18 different higher education centres. Armidale CAE was the only higher education centre that attracted numbers similar to the enclaves; 15 students in 1983 (NAEC 1984, Table A1, pp.141-143). Armidale CAE offered support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students outside of an enclave structure. It linked individual students to individual lecturers/tutors who offered emotional and academic advice to the students.

Nationally, a similar picture existed. Prior to the establishment of enclaves in 1974 103 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had enrolled in higher education centres; this being the largest annual enrolment to this point in time. After the establishment of a number of enclaves the national enrolment figure was 748 in 1979 and 617 in 1983. (C.D.E. Access Survey, 1980, Table 1 p.15 and NAEC 1984, p.34)

TOTAL NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
GRADUATES AND EMPLOYEES IN N.S.W. 1960-1987

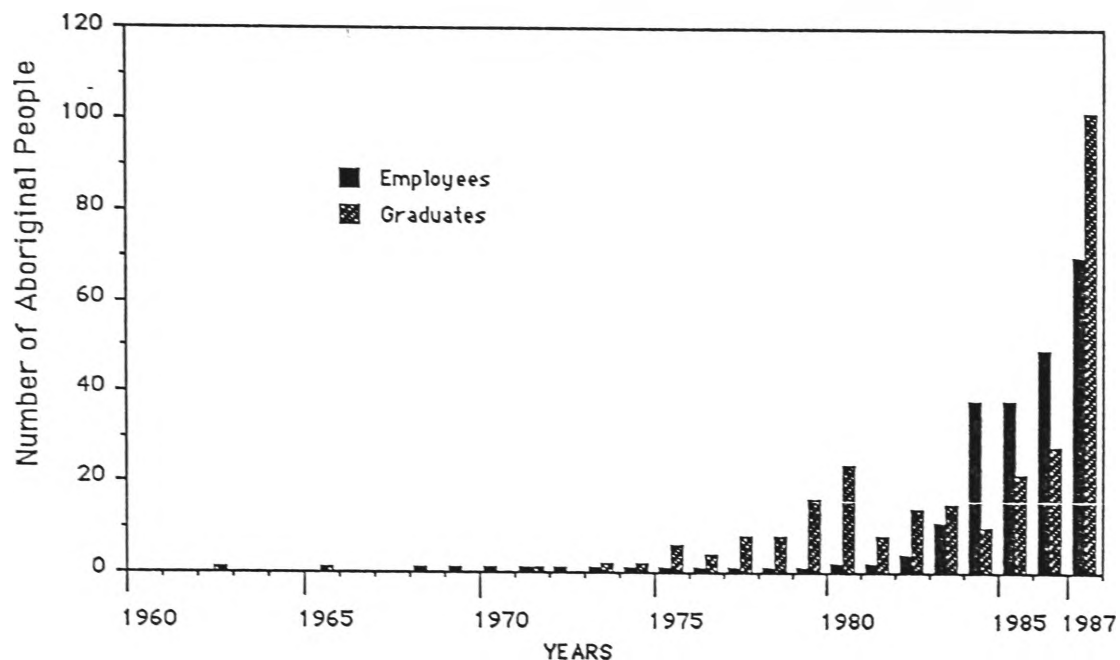


Figure 5.2

Source: data was collated from a variety of disparate sources including reports: N.A.E.C., 1984; 25 C.D.E. (1980): 3, (table folio), E.E.O. Management Plans from various H.E.C.s, 1983-1985, correspondence and communication between the researcher and E.E.O. officers in H.E.C.s (1988) the researcher and staff from A.E.S.U.s (1988), personal communication with Sutton.

NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS
ENROLLED IN HIGHER EDUCATION AWARD COURSES IN N.S.W. 1978 - 86

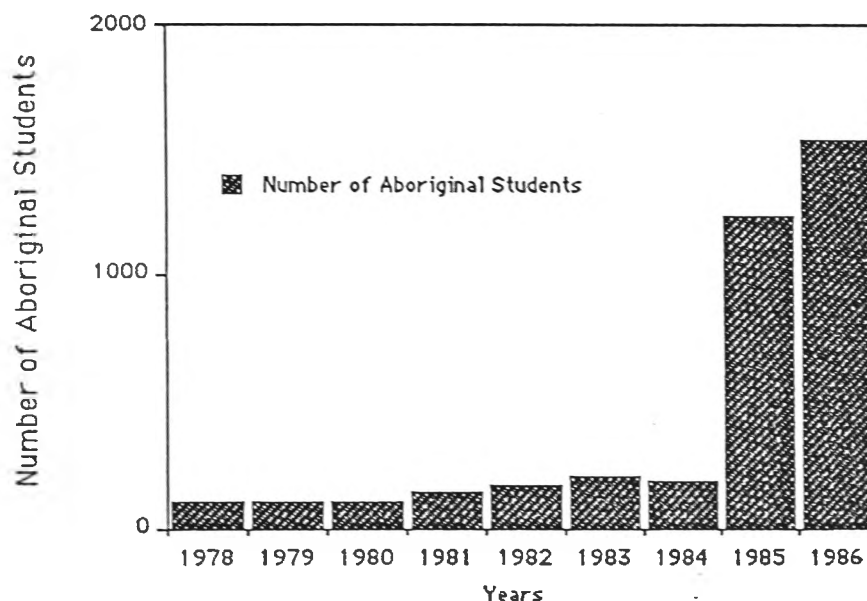


Figure 5.3

Sources: data was collated from a variety of disparate sources including reports: N.A.E.C., 1984; 29 C.D.E. (1980): 3, (table folio), N.S.W. A.E.C.G. 1983: 2 Jordan, 1984: 8 table 3 C.D.E.E.T. Annual reports 1985, 1986 and personal communication with Sutton, E; C.D.E.E.T. (1988)

By 1983 62.2% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (384) enrolled in higher education award courses where enclaves existed (NAEC 1984, p.70). This 62.2% were concentrated in 13 higher education centres as opposed to the remainder being scattered through 60 centres nationally.(NAEC 1984, p.152)

As mentioned before, in New South Wales the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates increased dramatically from 1985 onwards 22 in 1985 and 102 in 1987, (Figure 5.2) that is when students entering enclave programs in the normal course of events were expected to graduate. Of the graduates 22% graduated from the three enclaves in 1985 and 21% graduated from the three enclaves in 1987. The remaining 78% and 79% of graduates in both 1985 and 1987 were scattered through 6 and 16 higher education centres respectively. A number of other higher education centres produced large numbers of graduates in 1987, notably Hunter Institute, Sydney CAE, Cumberland College of Health Sciences and Armidale CAE.

Nationally a similar picture attests to a level of success associated with the production of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates from higher education centres where enclaves exist. Prior to the establishment of enclaves in 1974 a total of 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had graduated from higher education centres. By 1983 there were 48 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people graduating from higher education centres in one year.

It would appear from the above information that both nationally and within New South Wales the establishment of enclaves did increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and participation in higher education courses. It is also clear that where enclaves have been established the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates have increased both nationally and within New South Wales.

In 1983 the overall national participation rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in universities and colleges of advanced education was 0.39% compared to 2.2% of the general population in 1981.(NAEC, 1984, p.28) The attrition rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in higher education award courses existing from the early 1980s to the mid 1980s is notoriously very high; an attrition rate of 80% is often quoted. Figure 5.3 indicates the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolling in higher education courses in NSW. There is a constant enrolment figure of 100 from 1978 to 1982. From 1982 to 1984, corresponding with the establishment of the enclaves, the increase to 350 enrolments is quite dramatic. The most significant increase occurs between 1984 and 1985: 1,400 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in higher education courses. By this time the enclaves have had time to 'settle down' and time to promote themselves to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. From 1985 to 1986 the increase is less dramatic but still very significant, from 1,400 students in 1985 to 1,800 in 1986. A number of higher education centres began to modify their existing admission policies and establish Special Aboriginal Units: Centres such as Cumberland College of Health Sciences, Catholic College of Education Sydney, University of Wollongong, Hunter Institute to mention only a few. These very dramatic increases in enrolments in the latter four years are as yet not matched by the graduation rate.

5.1.2 Fields of Study- The focus on teacher education in the 1970s and early 1980s has meant that it is not unusual to discover 50% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in higher education courses are enrolled in Bachelor or Diplomas in Education in this period. Table 5.1 outlines the areas of study that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have entered from 1978 to 1986. Apart from the obvious increased general diversification over the latter years the increase in

ENROLMENTS OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
STUDENTS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION
IN N.S.W. BY AREAS OF STUDY : 1978-1986

Fields of Study	1978	1979	1980	1983	1985	1986
Bachelor of Arts	15	16	20	10	127	165
Teacher Education	78	112	93	87	568	764
Economics/Commerce	1	3	2	2	165	168
Law/Law Arts	8	10	6	8		
Medicine/Dentistry	1	-	1	1	47	46
Building	1	1	1	-	-	-
Optometry	2	1	1	-	-	-
Business Studies	2	3	6	3	-	-
Soc. Welfare/ Social Science	11	12	8	44	Behav.I Sci. 205	Behav.I Sci. 205
Art	3	3	7	4	57	84
Engineering	-	1	-	1	16	32
Surveying	-	1	1	1	-	-
Dance	-	28	34	4	-	-
Agriculture	-	2	2	1	7	7
Architecture	-	-	2	2	-	-
Medical Technology	-	-	1	-	-	-
Vet. Science	-	-	1	1	-	-
Bio Chemistry	-	-	-	1	-	-
Applied Science	-	-	-	2		
Science	6	5	5	4	45	67
Finance Administ.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Social Work	-	-	-	2	-	-
Applied Art	-	-	-	4	-	-
Drama	-	-	-	3	-	-
A. Culture & Heritage Certificates	-	-	-	-	181	184
Totals	128	198	191	186	1418	1722

Table 5.1

Sources: data collated from a variety of disparate sources including reports from N.A.E.C. 1984, p.29, 141 to 143, tables 3A, 3B,3C, C.D.E. 1980, p.3 (tables folio) and C.D.E.E.T. annual reports 1985, 1986. The information for 1981, 1982 and 1984 is not available. These figures include TAFE and other tertiary courses.

interest in the fields of medicine, law, economics, commerce, art and science is significant. Since 1978 consistent interest has been shown in the fields of teacher education, social welfare and social sciences. The emphasis more recently, however, would appear to be on the diversification of professional skills and knowledge, as well as a move away from welfare and service oriented courses to the more self-managing and self-determining and technically oriented courses such as medicine, law, business administration. A number of factors can account for this shift in emphasis. Firstly, as more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participate in higher education the wider scope becomes eminent; they see students studying in a wide range of fields and feel that they themselves could follow career paths in these areas. Secondly, the skills needed within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for self-management are becoming more diverse than the helping professions of welfare and teacher education. It is the author's experience that people are developing a sense of self-management rather than a sense of being managed or of being a 'helper'. Finally, national directions and advice to Commonwealth funding agencies have focused on the broader spectrum of professions.(NAEC, 1984)

5.1.3 Level of Qualification Achieved by Graduates, 1978 to 1986 - It is clear from Table 5.2 that the Associate Diplomas/Diplomas of the 1970s and early 1980s have been replaced by Degrees in the mid 1980s. There is also increasing participation in the post-graduate level from 1984 onwards. Obviously, the different levels of education are being seen and used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as stepping stones to higher degrees.

In sum, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enrolling in increasingly diverse fields of study over the last ten years. As the participation rate has increased so too, unfortunately, has the attrition rate. The increase in participation can be seen to correlate to the establishment of Special Programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, financial incentive for

prospective students, and increases in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completing their HSC. How effective these Special Programs have been will be the focus of the next discussion.

LEVEL OF QUALIFICATIONS OF ABORIGINAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION IN NSW 1978 - 1986

LEVEL	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Ph D	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	1	5	7	11
Masters degree	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	1			
Masters Qualifying *	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	3	18
Bachelors degree (Hons)*	0	1	1	N/A	N/A	0	0		
Postgraduate Dipl.	1	2	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0
Bachelors degree	32	35	43	N/A	N/A	126	187	964	1096
Diploma	70	64	49	N/A	N/A	27			
Associate Diploma	2	9	15	N/A	N/A	49	N/A	445	616
Totals	105	111	108	N/A	N/A	204	192	1419	1741

Table 5.2

Sources: data was collected from a variety of disparate sources including reports from C.D.E., 1980.p.3 (tables folio), N.A.E.C. 1984, p.35, table 4.7. and C.D.E.E.T. annual reports 1985, 1986.

Note: Figures are not available for 1981 and 1982 - N/A

5.1.4 The Effectiveness of Special Programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in NSW - Out of the issues discussed in previous chapters, some are explored in more detail in this section: reasons for student withdrawal from higher education courses; modes of study; the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity of the student; the cultural appropriateness of courses; the environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and racism.

1. Reasons for Student Withdrawal from Higher education Courses Jordan (1984) and Gallagher and Blair (1984) found that the single most important student reason for withdrawal was a lack of money. This factor related to inadequate payment as well as the uncertain delivery of financial support or "chronic incidence of late payment", in the words of one student. As most participating students were mature age with family obligations, to study on a wage well below the poverty line was too destructive and demeaning for a large number of families. In this situation the better option was to withdraw from study and find employment.

Other significant factors identified were a lack of motivation, defined as the likelihood of continued disability to triumph over multiple adversities, illness, marital problems, change of goals, disenchantment with course studies, lack of student housing and family support, children's illness and loneliness (Jordan, 1984, p.60, Table 7), lack of child-care facilities, family obligation and commitment.(Gallagher & Blair, 1984, pp.15-21)

2. Mode of Study The NAEC Policy Statement on Tertiary Education states that "to increase Aboriginal participation to higher education two pre-requisites are necessary in the short-term, the extensive provision of off-campus studies being one of these".(NAEC, 1988, p.vi)

In NSW most Aboriginal education conferences held at the State level have made reference to the need for higher education centres to develop courses that may be delivered in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, or at least courses that minimise time away from home. (Gallagher and Blair, 1984, N.A.E.C., 1984, 1988; and Blair, 1985) It is to be noted however that the need for the development of alternate modes of delivery of courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is not only to accommodate remote or rural communities but for urban people who have geographical access to higher education facilities. People with physical access to facilities may still have community and family obligations that make full-time on-campus study extremely difficult. Three courses have been designed to meet the need of alternate modes of study.

- a) Aboriginal Rural Education Program, offered at the Macarthur Institute of Higher Education.
- b) Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Health and Community Development offered at Cumberland College of Health Sciences
- c) Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Education/Diploma in Teaching (Aboriginal Education) offered at the Catholic College of Education Sydney.

The current apparent success of these Programs, exemplified by enrolment rates in excess of 200 at Macarthur Institute would confirm that the "time away from home" is a crucial factor in determining whether the delivery of higher education to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in NSW is successful.

3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity of Student

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students successfully graduating from higher education centre courses are "those from metropolitan, urban dispersed communities

and rural urban dispersed communities".(Willmot, 1988, p.26) It is clear from this statement that success in higher education is happening for those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are more assimilated through geographic dispersion, than other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enter a phase of identity reassessment at some stage of their higher education experience. A comment made by an Aboriginal student "Why should I get formal education? All that I am doing is growing away from my culture" (in Blair, 1983, p.11) is a very telling and serious concern for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. On entering a higher education centre the student is placed in a culturally foreign environment immediately. It is the experience of the author that the enclave, if one exists, may provide a focus or refuge for a sharing of fears, but this is not always enough. Students undergo a massive transformation questioning their own personal, educational and historical backgrounds. Questions that pose other questions about forced adoptions and fostering, oppression, social inferiority, poverty, and lack of opportunity often float to the surface of the student's mind. Some have never really had to come to terms with such issues before and others have unwittingly accepted them as a part of their daily experience. It is no wonder that of the first intake of full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to the Bachelor of Education course at Macarthur Institute of Higher Education, after establishment of the enclave, the only graduating student was one who denied her Aboriginality, claiming Greek heritage in the higher education centre environment. Are anonymity and denial the only option some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have in order to survive?

Discussion on this issue has only recently opened up amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as more of us have the opportunity to participate in higher education. Willmot and Watson provide some insights worth presenting in detail in this context.

Willmot (1988) asserts that the Separatists fear assimilation as a result of higher education and that there is much support for this notion. Some of the comments from respondents in the sixth chapter alluded to this also. Evolutionists, he would assert, would view European education as offering empowerment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people without loss of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. He further states that "the real solution to maintaining a level of Aboriginality or cultural base is to intellectualise culture".(Willmot, 1988, p.27)

Watson illuminates the vast cultural differences that exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and higher education 'culture'. Her reference to higher education centres as 'colonial importations' is significant. Watson asserts that higher education centres have a "rootlessness, a detachment from this land and responsibility for it".(Watson, 1988, p.2) In other words, from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian perspective, higher education centres may themselves be seen as culturally devoid and lacking in real identity in the Australian context. Higher education centres are monoethnocentric structures. according to Watson:

Murri knowledge, students and staff are in the process of trying to establish themselves in alien, colonial institutions in ways which will enhance and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and culture and explain it to others".(Watson, 1988, p.5)

This, one could speculate, is what Willmot refers to as intellectualising culture. For Watson there is a new task for Murrin - for the "first time in our history, we are being put in the position of having to describe ourselves to the colonising society - a difficult task because of the difficulties of dialogue".

Clearly then, an assessment and understanding of the whole question of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity for students and for staff within higher

education centres is also a crucial factor in the successful delivery of higher education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

4. Cultural Appropriateness This issue obviously relates to the question of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. As analysed in some detail in Chapter Six, the teaching of Aboriginal Studies in higher education centres has been a major issue for debate at state and national conferences over the last decade. Of course this is only one aspect of the debate on the cultural appropriateness of courses. The debate goes beyond the teaching of Aboriginal Studies as core or elective units, and beyond the adding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all fields of study to the discussion of changed terms of reference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation. That is, terms that are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Watson's discussion on the teaching of Aboriginal Studies in higher education centres raises a multitude of related issues. In the discussion of higher education centres being 'rootless' in this nation, Watson adds that the division into a multitude of disciplines intensifies that detachment, making any link with the land and, at all times, all reality, even more tenuous for all concerned. Higher education centres must take steps to acknowledge different living traditions, open themselves to change. By creating a 'truly Indigenous place of learning', one that exists on its own terms of reference and on cross-culturally agreed levels of scholarship. A new potential for dialogue and harmony between two traditions is opened up leading to the evolution of a vision of a more mature and enriched University, at last putting down roots in this land, and tapping into a past measured in tens of thousands of years.(Watson, 1988, pp.2,9)

The development and the implementation of appropriate structures and courses is not only critical to the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education. It is crucial to the development and growth of higher education centres themselves in this country, because it opens up a system of higher education that is

truly Australian in identity and nature. Higher education no longer exists as a colonial importation lacking relevance to contemporary Australia. It is no longer monoethnic in nature and structure.

5. Racism

It is a sad reality that on top of all the changes and adaptations that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students face when studying in higher education centres they have to endure various forms of racism. This problem has been acknowledged by the NAEC and they have recently released a booklet on 'Combating Racism'.(NAEC, 1988) Perhaps dealing with people's racism is also a part of the intellectualising of culture. Racism is, however, a pressure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students do not need as an added burden when they make the choice to study. For Special Programs to be truly effective, mechanisms for preparing prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and for dealing with racism so that the pressure is not always on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' shoulders are crucial.

The creation of Special Programs is one way of dealing with the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by increasing their participation and graduation rates in higher education courses. Quality programs that plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural differences are the only way that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will not be faced with identity crises, with an onslaught of overt and covert racism, or faced with withdrawing mid-stream through a course, and again experiencing a feeling of failure. To date, despite adaptations to some general systems and the introduction of a range of special measures for many Aboriginal people, the situation remains fundamentally unchanged, and it cannot be said that they have real equity of access.(NAEC, 1984, p.7)

As Watson states "a radical transformation is necessary if higher education centres are to be of use to us".(Watson, 1988, p.2) It does not matter if, in Willmot's

words you are an Evolutionist, a Separatist or an Integrationist, the higher education system is not meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Willmot,1988,p23). Creating access and Special Programs of any nature and degree has increased the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education centres but it is the belief of the researcher that the attrition rates are too high, the cultural cost is currently too high as is the individual and community cost. A radical transformation of higher education structures, values and ideals is the key to quality successful education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

5.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff

Very few people have addressed the issue of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education centres. Perhaps researchers felt that nothing exists to research, or at the very best there are too few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres to make analysis worthwhile. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education centres is a recent phenomenon that can be seen to relate to the emergence of Special Programs such as enclaves for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The creation of Special Programs created the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Unfortunately, higher education centres have treated the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as marginal. Very little, if any planning has occurred prior to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment has been piecemeal, and ad hoc, costing the higher education centre very little. Employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has, however, been stressful, demanding and futureless.

In this section it is the intention to provide a statistical overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education centres NSW, followed by discussion, and finally an analysis and review of a survey conducted with Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander employees from higher education centres throughout the state.

5.2.1 A Statistical Overview and Analysis of Aboriginal Employment in Higher Education Centres in NSW- Prior to 1970 there was no known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education centres in NSW. From 1970 to 1978 there was one person employed as an academic, but this person has only recently identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The next phase from 1972 to 1982 shows an increase to five employees; three ancillary and two academic. We see considerable growth from 1982 to 1984, then a plateau at 35 staff; ten academic and 25 ancillary. From 1986 to 1988 the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff increased from 35 to 80; 25 academic and 55 ancillary staff (Figures 5.4, 5.5 and Table 5.3).

TOTAL NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
EMPLOYED IN H.E.C.s IN N.S.W. FROM 1968 TO 1988

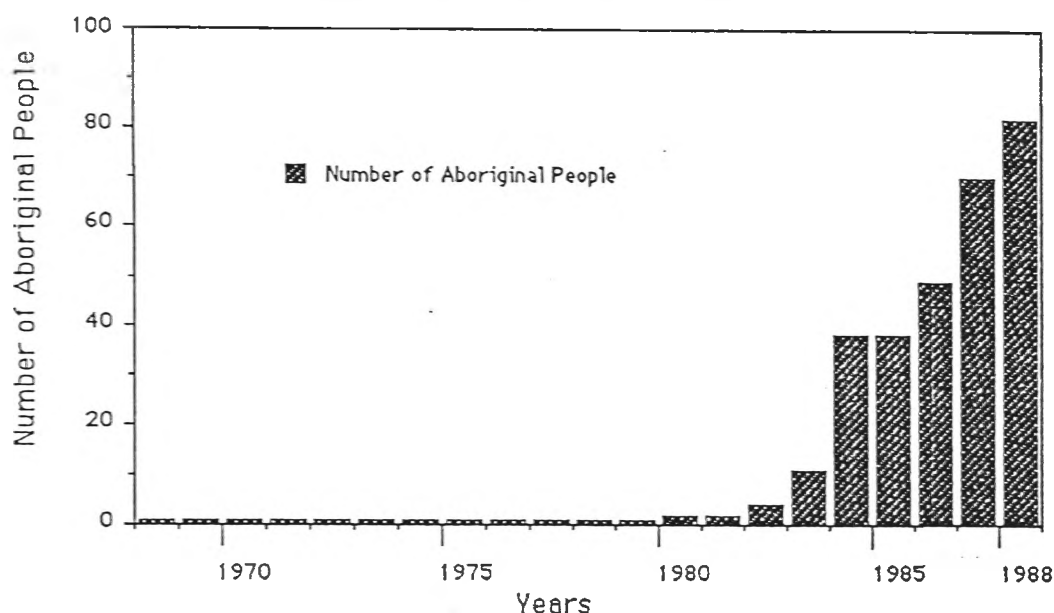


Figure 5.4

Source: data was collated from a variety of disparate sources including personal information, E.E.O. Management Plans from various H.E.C.s, 1983-1985, correspondence between the researcher and co-ordinators in A.E.C.s (1988) correspondence between Aboriginal Education Standing Committee, Lecturers' Association N.S.W.; Acting Director O.D.E.O.P.E (9/12/86, 30/12/86); personal communication between researcher and staff from A.E.S.U.s (1988) and with Sutton, E., C.D.E.E.T., 1988

NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
EMPLOYED IN H.E.C.s 1968 TO 1988: ACADEMIC AND ANCILLARY
POSITIONS IN N.S.W.

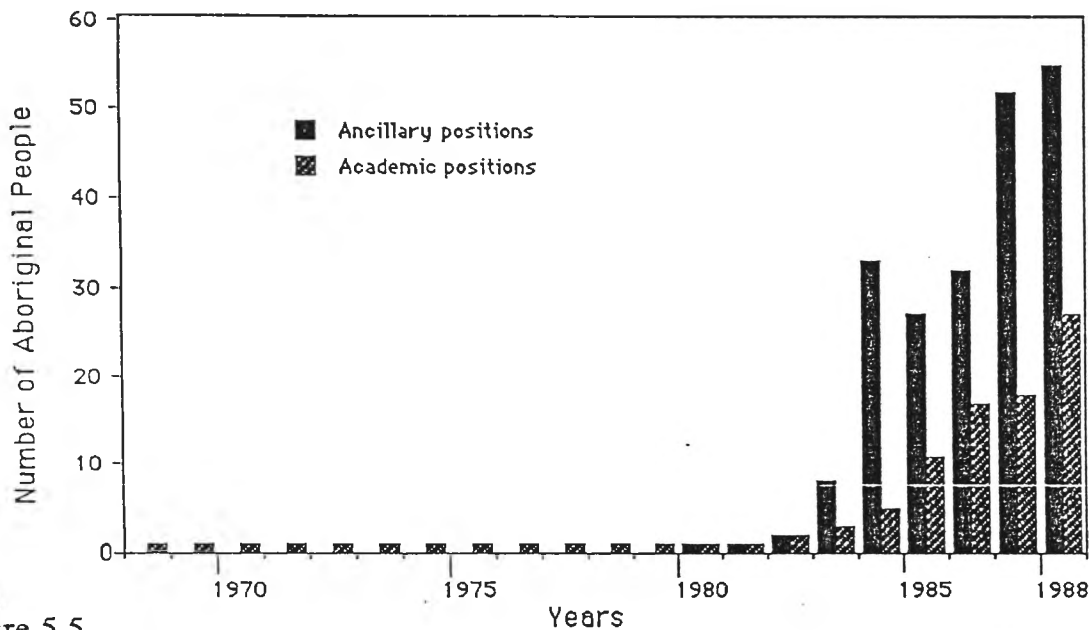


Figure 5.5

Source: data was collated from a variety of disparate sources including personal information, E.E.O. Management Plans from various H.E.C.s, 1983-1985, correspondence between the researcher and the E.E.O. co-ordinators in H.E.C.s (1988) correspondence between Aboriginal Education Standing Committee, N.S.W.T.F. and the Acting Director O.D.E.O.P.E (9/12/86, 30/12/86); personal communication between researcher and staff from A.E.S.U.s (1988) and with Sutton, E., C.D.E.E.T., 1988

part 1	UN 'castle.			Arm'le CAE.			Uni NSW.			MIHE.			Mit'II CAE			NR CAE			Hunter 1			TOTALS for year
	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	
1969 ↑ ↓	1	-	1																			
1980		1	-	1	-	1	1															
1981	1	-	1	-	1	1																
1982	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1										4
1983	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	3	3	-	-	-	
1984	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	6	6	1	3	4	-	4	4	-	2	2	-	3	3	see part 2
1985	1	-	1	1	3	4	-	1	1	1	5	6	-	4	4	2	-	2	4	-	3	3
1986	1	1	2	2	4	6	-	1	1	1	4	5	-	5	5	2	-	2	2	1	3	4 see part 2
1987	1	1	2	2	7	9	-	1	1	1	4	5	-	3	3	2	3	5	1	4	5	
1988	1	1	2	1	5	6	1	1	2	2	3	5	-	4	4	2	3	5	2	5	7	

Table 5.3 (PART 1)

Total number of Aboriginal people employed in HEC s, 1968 - 1988: ancillary and academic positions in NSW.

Sources: data was collected from disparate sources including personal information, EEO management plans from various HEC s (1983 - 1985), correspondence between the researcher and EEO co-ordinators in HEC s (1988), correspondence between the Aboriginal Education Standing Committee Lecturers' Association, NSW TF and the Acting Director, ODEOPE (9/12/86 & 30/12/86), personal AESU s (1988) and with MrE. Sutton CDEET (1988).

part 2	Uni Woll'g			Uni of Syd			Macq Uni			Nep'n CAE			Uni of NE			TOTALS FOR THE YEAR
	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	
1969 ↑ ↓																
1980																
1981																
1982																
1983	?	?	?	?	?	?	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	?	?	11
1984	?	?	6	?	?	?	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	5	31
1985	-	3	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	*4*	5	36
1986	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4*	5	44
1987	1	3	4	1	4	5	?	?	?	-	1	1	1	8	9	62
1988	1	3	4	3	4	7	?	?	?	-	1	1	2	7	9	78

Table 5.3 (PART 2)

Total number of Aboriginal people employed in HEC s, 1968 - 1988: ancillary and academic positions in NSW.

Sources: data was collected from disparate sources including personal information, EEO management plans from various HEC s (1983 - 1985), correspondence between the researcher and EEO co-ordinators in HEC s (1988), correspondence between the Aboriginal Education Standing Committee Lecturers' Association, NSW TF and the acting director, DEOPE (9/12/86 & 30/12/86), personal AESU s (1988) and with MrE. Sutton CDEET (1988).

part 3	Uni Woll'g			Uni of Syd			Macq Uni			Nep'n CAE			Uni of NE			TOTALS FOR THE YEAR
	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	Ac	Anc	T	
1969 ↕																
1980																
1981																
1982																
1983	?	?	?	?	?	?	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	?	?	11
1984	?	?	6	?	?	?	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	5	31
1985	-	3	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	*4*	5	36
1986	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4*	5	44
1987	1	3	4	1	4	5	?	?	?	-	1	1	1	8	9	62
1988	1	3	4	3	4	7	?	?	?	-	1	1	2	7	9	78

Table 5.3 (PART 3)

Total number of Aboriginal people employed in HEC s, 1968 - 1988: ancillary and academic positions in NSW.

Sources: data was collected from disparate sources including personal information, EEO management plans from various HEC s (1983 - 1985), correspondence between the researcher and EEO co-ordinators in HEC s (1988), correspondence between the Aboriginal Education Standing Committee Lecturers' Association, NSW TF and the Acting Director, ODEOPE (9/12/86 & 30/12/86), personal AESU s (1988) and with MrE. Sutton CDEET (1988).

Clearly the growth has been in the ancillary area; where in 1981 there was one academic and one ancillary staff and by 1988 the number of ancillary staff (55) has doubled to that of the academic staff (25).

The higher education centres housing the greatest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees (Table 5.3), over the years have not been confined to the three enclaves. Other significant employers have been Armidale CAE, Hunter Institute, the University of New England, the Catholic College of Education Sydney, Cumberland College of Health Sciences, The University of Wollongong and the Sydney College of the Arts. Though these places make no claims to housing enclaves as such they do offer support programs of one kind or another. What is exceedingly clear is that the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education centres in NSW did not exist in any significant way until Special Program funding became available from the Commonwealth. The tenuous nature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is characterised by a conglomeration of external funding sources which operate mainly on an annual funding cycle. The result is a proliferation of contracted employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The first Aboriginal person employed with tenure was in the Catholic College of Education Sydney in 1984. In 1988 only five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy tenure as academics and two enjoy permanency as ancillary staff throughout NSW.

The levels of appointment have until 1988 for most higher education centres been traditionally at the lower end of the scale for both ancillary and academic staff (Cumberland College of Health Sciences is a notable exception). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the main have not enjoyed most of the benefits of employment in higher education centres. They lack appropriate duty statements and thus clarity of functions; they lack access to decision-making within the higher education centre; the

very nature of the work is overtaxing and stressful, they have tended to be isolated from mainstream staff; not all have had access to superannuation, study leave, staff development and in some cases recreation and sick leave; they do not have time for research; and they lack an awareness of higher education centre networking structures; internally and externally, formally and informally. These problems are by no means confined to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed within Higher Education centres. When experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, however, the solution to these problems must be framed within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms of reference and understanding.

Jordan in her review of enclaves writes of the demonstrated commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working in support systems and of this inequitable employment situation "Aboriginal staff often forego security of employment and the rewards of a normal career structure, dedicating their energies to the advancement of Aboriginal people".(Jordan, 1984, p.9)

There has been some limited direction through the NAEC for higher education centres to produce policy on the staffing of support systems. Any policy it advises must emanate from a central body within the national and state levels. They have suggested that positions become institutional and 'Head' positions become academic positions. All positions they stress must have clear job descriptions and must be advertised.(Jordan, 1984, pp.9-13)

Jordan concludes in her review that

a support system which is 'institutionalised' is likely to be accorded high status within the higher education centre, it is likely to have a wider spread of support of staff not directly connected with the support programs, staff are built into the power structure and have access to academic/financial/policy making bodies, staff of the support systems have the same career patterns as other members of staff".(Jordan, 1984, p.23)

Jordan provides recommendations for the funding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment based on internal institutional funds, clarity of roles, parity of awards and conditions with mainstream positions, appropriate resourcing and facilities to operate from and with, opportunity for staff development and higher education study, and appropriate levels and numbers of staff to competently deliver successful programs for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.(Jordan, 1984, pp.23-5, 53-54) Jordan is correct when she states that "the academic world is in general an alien place for Aboriginal people ... thought should be given to ways in which the first generation of Aboriginal academics should be provided with support".(Jordan, 1984, p.32)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support systems should not be the sole employers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within higher education centres. Higher education centres must provide the opportunity for the general institutional employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need to be given the choice and opportunity to diversify and further develop our skills. Currently, the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres are employed within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support systems which are functionally specific. In these support systems there is limited staff development and limited opportunity for the cross-fertilisation of skills necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to function in the general higher education centre. Any future discontinuance of funding to higher education centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support units would ultimately result in a pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people unable to find employment within mainstream higher education centres if they so chose because there have been few opportunities for 'skilling' those of us employed in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support units. If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the higher education sector is to be equitable to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people then higher education centres have an obligation to provide the equivalent of on-the-job training, to transform Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander people from functionally specific employees in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support units to multifunctional employees within a higher education environment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have certain unique skills, cultural values and cultural practices that may well benefit higher education centres. Our background offers the roots of a heritage dating back to the creation of this land, with the values, the practices and philosophies that accompany these. Within a context of reciprocal and shared learning processes higher education centres would benefit from the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acquire a more enriched, mature Australian character.

Higher education centres should reflect the interests and the needs of the community that they serve. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are an integral part of these communities. Our interests and needs must be considered: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees at higher education centres must not be marginalised. There is a place for separate systems, research and curriculum centres and so on but according to some people the consequences may well be isolation, skill stagnation and redundancy. (Willmot 1988, p.27) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a place in the academic world with the terms of our participation being culturally reassessed on the basis of our needs, interests and culture, ultimately resulting in a "new potential for dialogue and harmony between those traditions" (Watson, 1988, p.13) and a system therefore that addresses the needs of its constituents. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a right to a choice of system; be that integral to a non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander system or a separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander system

Any reassessment of the terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation must tackle the issue of "academic depth and rigour". Some Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people's life experiences can offer much greater quality to other people's education than some people's post-graduate research; a major criteria for the demonstration of an individual's academic depth and rigour. Post-graduate work does require the employment of certain unique skills; research, analysis, documentation, conceptualisation and discipline. However, the skills developed and employed by academics can be arrived at by more than one route. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for example have demonstrated the effective employment of the above skills working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; researching the feasibility of a program, designing programs on the basis of an assessment of community needs, submission after submission to various sources for funding, analysis of the costing etc. These skills and experience must become an integral part of the discussion on academic depth and rigour and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education.

CHAPTER 6

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: EMPLOYEES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW today clearly view higher education as a valuable step towards self-determination and self-management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Higher education is seen to provide knowledge and skills that will bring about change amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as well as enhance their credibility with respect to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Higher education is likened by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to an entry ticket into a variety of professions or vocations to be utilised by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Quite simply it is seen by some to provide equality. Others would argue that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not want equality with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities but there is an assumption that knowledge of 'the system' will provide people with access to and participation in decision-making. That is, self-determination and self-management across all levels of 'the system'. This perception of higher education is a phenomenon of the 1970s and the 1980s. Some very negative schooling experiences, discussed in Chapter Three have until recently unfavourably coloured Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's perceptions of higher education. The suspicion and cynicism felt towards the schooling system was carried over to the higher education system. The lack of access to appropriate schooling in NSW for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people indirectly affected our access to higher education. As a result Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had only limited experience of higher education and limited avenues and choices for access to higher education, where

the desire existed. There was really no vision held amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of participation in higher education until the 1970s and 1980s.

This chapter focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education in the 1970s and 1980s. It analyses and discusses various reports, and a survey conducted by the author to ascertain the concerns and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in higher education centres against a background of general issues raised by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people.

6.1 Analysis and Discussion of Conference Reports and Recommendations, Surveys and Commissioned Reports - 1970 to 1988

Table 6.1 outlines the more specific issues raised in the various reports and surveys analysed. (Dawson, 1970; Watts, 1976; NSWAECEG, 1981; Allen, 1983; Blair, 1984; Blair & Gallagher, 1984; Blair, 1985; NAEC, 1986, Willmot, 1988; NSWAECEG, 1988)

An investigation of the issues outlined in Table 6.1 quite clearly indicates an increase in the diversity of concerns over the years. In the 1970s the issues of concern focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access to primarily teacher education courses, and included issues that related to selection procedures and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community awareness of courses and higher education centres. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were articulating the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement and support at all levels of operation in higher education centres, thereby establishing an appropriate consultative mechanism. Within the delivery of the courses, practice teaching and the teaching of Aboriginal Studies were seen as important issues for discussion.

MOST COMMON ISSUES RE: HIGHER EDUCATION 1970-1988 ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE PART 1

ISSUES	Name of Survey/Report and date					
	1970 DAWSON	1976 WATTS	1976-80 N.A.E.C.	1981 N.S.W.A.E.C.G. Bendigo	1983 Allen (2)	1984 Blair (8)
• Cultural Appropriateness/Differences				X		
• Aboriginal Community Awareness			XXXX			
• Aboriginal Community Involvement and Support at all levels in Higher Education Centres: Decision making			X			
• Appropriate Resources/Facilities						
• Employment: Aboriginality as employment criteria Permanency Training						X
• Funding					X	X
• Research/Evaluation					X	X
• Aboriginal Studies: Core Perspectives			XXXXXX			
• Federated Aboriginal College						
• Accreditation						
• Increased Number of Aboriginal Graduates						
• Cultural Maintenance and Strengthening						
• Increased Number of Aboriginal Enrolments			XX			
• Integration of Special Measures						
• Importance of Community goals of Higher Education not Individual Goals			XXXX			
• Alternative Education Models						
• Bridging/Orientation						
• Group Programmes						
• Student Accomodation			X			
• Student Financial Support			X			
• Child Care Facilities						
• Networking						
• Student Support						X
• Appropriate selection procedures policy			XX			
• Aboriginal control, Aboriginal Education Support Units				X		
• Knowledge of Equal Opportunity Unions						X
• Appropriate Recruitment Policy						X
• Teacher Education Target						X
• Practical Teaching			XX	X		X
• Consultation			XX	X		
• Aboriginal Student Attrition Rates			XX			
• Established targets beyond Teacher Training						
• Academic Staff Sensitisation						
• Lack of skills/preparation						
• Higher Education skills = Self Determination	X	X				
• Low Expectations of Aboriginal People						

Table 6.1 Part 1 Key - x represents incidence of 1

MOST COMMON ISSUES RE: HIGHER EDUCATION 1970-1988 ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE PART 2

ISSUES	Name of Survey/Report and date				
	1984 Blair & Gallagher	1985 N.S.W.A.E.C.G. Armidale	1986 N.A.E.C.	1988 Willmot	1988 N.S.W.A.E.C.G. Council
• Cultural Appropriateness/Differences	X	X			X
• Aboriginal Community Awareness	X	X	X		X
• Aboriginal Community Involvement and Support at all levels in Higher Education Centres: Decision making					
• Appropriate Resources/Facilities		X	X		
• Employment: Aboriginality as employment criteria Permanency Training			X		X
• Funding	X		X		X
• Research/Evaluation	X	X	X		X
• Aboriginal Studies: Core Perspectives			X		X
• Federated Aboriginal College	X				X
• Accreditation	X	X			X
• Increased Number of Aboriginal Graduates			X		X
• Cultural Maintenance and Strengthening					X
• Increased Number of Aboriginal Enrolments					X
• Integration of Special Measures			X		
• Importance of Community goals of Higher Education not Individual Goals		X			
• Alternative Education Models		X			
• Bridging/Orientation			X		
• Group Programmes	X		X		
• Student Accomodation			X		
• Student Financial Support			X		
• Child Care Facilities			X		
• Networking	X		X		
• Student Support			X		
• Appropriate selection procedures policy					
• Aboriginal control, Aboriginal Education Support Units				X	
• Knowledge of Equal Opportunity Unions			X		
• Appropriate Recruitment Policy					
• Teacher Education Target					
• Practical Teaching					
• Consultation					
• Aboriginal Student Attrition Rates					
• Established targets beyond Teacher Training					
• Academic Staff Sensitisation	X	X			
• Lack of skills/preparation		X			
• Higher Education skills = Self Determination	X				
• Low Expectations of Aboriginal People	X				

Table 6.1 Part 2 Key - x represents incidence of 1

By the 1980s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were discussing issues that related to the access, participation and outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in a range of higher education courses. Issues that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education centres also became apparent in forums of discussion. The issues that people identified as important all related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in existing monoethnocentric higher education centres. In 1984 and 1988 we see the notion of freestanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander "places of higher learning" emerging as an alternative to the existing systems so obviously failing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The increase reflects the refinement of issues brought about through constant debate on higher education, kept consistently on the agenda of the NSWAECEG over the last seven years. The original focus was on teacher education specifically. More recently people are recommending that as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we must diversify our skills, and therefore enter a range of faculties. It is now possible to have greater diversity of thought because the key issue in the 1970s was the issue of effective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entry to higher education at which point only "a handful of accidental university graduates had been produced".(Willmot, 1988, p.23)

Effective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entry into higher education centres is still an issue, but its emphasis is now different and the issue focuses upon concerns additional to the sheer increase of enrolment numbers. Emphasis is now on the development of appropriate and centralised selection procedures as well as the development of policy by the NSWAECEG, NAEC, Government and higher education centres to ensure the quality of students and the diversification of enrolments in a range of discipline areas. Previously the concern was with increasing the applicant pool. This has been achieved, and now other connected issues emerge. The increased size of the applicant pool in an environment of diminishing higher education places and the increased shared interest in higher education as distinct from the enrolment of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in three enclaves has meant that there is now a need for the co-ordination and centralisation of procedures of selection.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also having to become more future oriented. In the past an ad hoc approach has dominated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander response to the need for change: for example, a need has arisen for a large number of people to be trained as teachers because of the great shortage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and because of the appalling attrition rates amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students. The remedy was to develop as quickly as possible a program within higher education centres to train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were given special entry to higher education centres so that we could train as teachers. Special entry programs attracted the mature age Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, lessening the dependence and expectation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leavers to enter higher education in large numbers in the near future. Little consideration was given to the appropriateness of such a program. Careful and considered diagnosis may have prevented a large number of problems that in fact did occur and are still occurring. The call for policy is an indication of this shift as well as a desire to control our own destiny.

In recent times there is an indication that people are more concerned with the quality of outcomes for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students not so much with access to programs. Relatively recent experience of higher education has led to the emergence of more clearly articulated needs and differences. Amongst these are the guarantee that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be delivered fully accredited programs and not second rate bridging or access programs that give access only to a revolving door. Also, a guarantee that an individual's cultural identity will not be lost or destroyed in the educative process and within the culturally alien environment of a higher education centre is required by Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander communities. Finally that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will emerge from higher education centres with useful and transferable skills.(1) Employment issues also emerge as more complex with time and with experience. There are still problems of access to employment in higher education centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but there are also concerns with appropriate working conditions and experiences at appropriate rates of pay.

For some the establishment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled "places of higher learning" would eliminate most of the above identified problems and would encompass Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs and aspirations. In summarising the reports, the concerns that are voiced most frequently by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander empathisers are as follows:

1. Need for greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander awareness of what higher education has to offer; course content, course length, expectations, commitment necessary, support available.
2. Need for the teaching of Aboriginal Studies to all students as core units and as perspectives across all fields of study.
3. Revised funding procedures such as: earmarked funds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, the establishment of a centralised source of external funding and the use of internal funding by higher education centres for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
4. Development of alternative education models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students that cater for the special cultural needs that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have.

5. The utilisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogical principles in higher education centre teaching.
6. Trialling of alternate modes of delivery, including distance education.
7. The use of culturally appropriate curriculum.
8. Issues that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within higher education centres.

These issues are as diverse as they are practical for the smooth and effective delivery of higher education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

From this analysis of conference reports, recommendations and of surveys completed over a period of 18 years, it becomes clear that the issues that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are grappling with today are more complex and more diverse than only two decades ago. They reflect change through experience. The need is no greater today than it was 18 years ago for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in higher education but the expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are greater. This is demonstrated in the surveys conducted amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW that follow.

6.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees in Higher Education Centres: A Description and Discussion of Survey Methodology

Two surveys of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres were conducted in the period from March to October in 1988 to assess Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education. Before relating its results, it is important to clarify some methodological points, bearing on the validity and reliability of the data as defined in a non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander framework.

Statistical research methodologies, though recently encompassing a variety of techniques and instruments still remain bound within a non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander framework. When conducting survey research amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities a number of problems become linked to the cultural mismatch between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and existing non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey methodology. These contrast with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in that they tend to pose direct rather than indirect questions, have a formal rigid presentation of questionnaires and surveys as opposed to less formal and generally non-written presentation, the expectation of a certain level of literacy and of associated conceptual, analytical and processing skills that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally possess to a lesser degree than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and in the more rigid, objective techniques used for sampling and determining a representative response rate by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The researcher encountered a number of methodological problems related to the points above. Two surveys were designed and distributed. The first survey was

designed to gauge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people's perceptions of higher education. The second survey was designed to gauge the reaction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees within higher education centres to their working conditions, their attitudes to a variety of issues, including equal employment opportunity, the function of enclaves, the Aboriginalisation of Aboriginal Education Units, employment selection criteria etc. Both surveys yielded low response rates; a 30% rate of return for the survey to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and a 35% rate of return for the survey to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees of higher education centres.

When surveying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members the first difficulty encountered was one of definition. Within New South Wales there are a diverse number and type of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; ranging from a dispersed urban sector, an urban sector, a rural sector and a rural dispersed sector (Figure 3.2). An effective survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people's perceptions must encompass each of these sectors. The problem still exists as to who are and where are the "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities". There are no registers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as such; Lands Councils and A.E.C.G.s maintain records of members but not all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would be members and therefore recorded. Therefore those that are recorded are likely to form a non-representative sample of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The people recorded tend to be mostly those with specific interests in education and/or land rights and tend to have a high level of political and social awareness. Health services maintain records of clientele but again not all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people utilise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services. Ideally, a list of people compiled from records from all three services; Land Councils, A.E.C.G.s and Health Services would render the most accurate information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and population distribution. 'The community' must also be identified by

language, kinship or family, that is, factors other than numerical ones. It needs to be noted that the data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from official census surveys, as they are carried out in Australia, are inappropriate and inaccurate for much the same reasons mentioned above. The compilation of a registry of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from which random sampling can be initiated is a research topic of some magnitude for the near future. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we must define our community.

For the purpose of the study on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people's perceptions of higher education the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community was defined numerically and in terms of three A.E.C.G. regions; metropolitan north - rural dispersed, metropolitan south-west - urban and the north west region - rural. Each of these regions have concentrations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the metropolitan-north region being more dispersed than the other two.

The identification of 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community', employed within higher education centres was straightforward because of the small numbers involved and the networking amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees of higher education centres, the result of which being that we all know each other.

The problem of defining the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community has implications for the sampling techniques employed. Random sampling in traditional statistical survey methodology was not possible in the Community survey, because of the limits associated with statistical random sampling. As already stated the existence of a clearly identified population does not yet exist to randomly select from.

For the purpose of the Community survey, the researcher distributed surveys to 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, through New South Wales A.E.C.G. representatives and Aboriginal Home School Liaison Officers. In all instances the nominated people had access to a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their communities on a daily basis. People were enthusiastic to distribute and collect the surveys. Unfortunately, because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people usually operating in these positions operate in and react to crisis situations, of which there are usually a number in Aboriginal Affairs, the distribution and the collation of the researchers' survey soon became a low priority. As a result only 45 people responded out of 150. In the metropolitan south-west there were no responses to the survey.

The small response rate amplifies the bias in the return sample. Bias existed in the return sample in the form of a favourable disposition to education, and an ability to respond conceptually in written form to questionnaires.

The use of sympathetic researchers when surveying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is unavoidable if the researcher aims to receive honest responses. In this instance, however, the distributors of the survey chose to distribute the surveys to their own personal contact group rather than to a representative cross-section of each of the communities being sampled. They chose to do this because of their inexperience in survey distribution and because of their lack of time through their own community involvements. A third ingredient was necessary to render a successful sample outcome: that is this researcher being with the distributors in each of the communities to monitor distribution. As a result, the survey respondents had a favourable disposition to education through their involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community education.

Because of the need to have sympathetic researchers the sampling technique chosen was a considered one. It ensured a maximum number of possible responses but

it excluded respondents who did not have contact with the survey distributor and therefore felt sympathetic towards to the researcher.

Another unavoidable bias was the selection of respondents introduced by the medium of written questionnaires. The need to provide written responses to the questionnaire selected out those respondents who felt uncomfortable with writing. This bias was particularly visible in the very favourable opinion expressed about education. This was not surprising given that they had strong educational backgrounds, having completed Years 10, 11 and 12 at school.

Sampling the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in higher education centres was less difficult. The numbers of Aboriginal people employed are still small (84 in 1988) and a strong network exists amongst employees. As a result every employee was sent a survey with an explanatory note and numerous follow-up phone calls. However the response rate was again low (34%). The small response rate to this survey again amplifies bias in the return sample. The response rate was low for a number of reasons. Firstly, the demands of the work environment in itself makes the completion of surveys for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees a very low priority. Secondly, the work environment has not given people much time to respond to and think about the issues raised in the survey. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have had little time or opportunity to react conceptually to such issues. We act in response to a need. Respondents to the higher education survey have experience with surveys, writing and analysis - all to varying degrees. It is the experience of the author that the opinions expressed by the respondents are characteristic of the sample.

The data that follow have therefore to be considered not as strictly statistically valid but more as an indication of issues important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The fact that no data of better statistical quality and cultural appropriateness is available makes the use of this data in the context of this study

critical. In the future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must come to terms with the existing cultural mismatch in research methodology and move to create functional, statistical methodologies.

6.3 Survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Currently Employed in Higher Education Centres in New South Wales

Eighty four survey instruments were distributed to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres throughout New South Wales during the period June to August 1988. Of these, 24 were returned; a response rate of 34%. Of the 24 respondents, twelve were male and twelve were female. The age range varied from 21 years to 53 years. The average age was 34 years. The age groups with the largest numbers were the 20 to 25 years (six respondents) and the 36 to 40 years (eight respondents) (see Table 6.2)

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

AGES	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
20-25	4	2	6
26-30	1	1	2
31-35	1	2	3
36-40	4	4	8
41-45	0	2	2
46-49	1	0	1
50+	1	1	2
TOTALS	12	12	24

Table 6.2

6.3.1 Employment - Three employment issues targeted for comment within the survey were permanency and tenure, the type of employment and the funding of staff positions.

PERMANENCY AND TENURE:

The majority of people surveyed (79%) were employed on contract. The average contract was one to one and a half years' duration, with the most common period of employment being one year. The contract periods varied from three months to four years. The academic staff on contract had a range of contract durations from one year to three years. The two year (three) and three year (three) contracts were the most common duration.

Of those respondents permanently employed (21%) 40% of the positions were in one higher education centre. 80% of these respondents were employed in academic positions with tenure and 20% held a permanent ancillary position.

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT:

Most of the respondents were employed in ancillary staff positions (54%) but there was not as clear a majority as would have been reflected if the rate of return of surveys was higher. This is known because the numbers of staff are still small, everyone knows each other and their basic form of employment.

From the respondents there are clearly more males employed in academic positions (64%) than females. There are more females employed in the ancillary positions than males (61%). This is an interesting statistic given the opposite trend demonstrated in higher education employment patterns for the general population. A gender-based analysis though, in the context of this thesis, is only an interesting fact.

It is the belief of the researcher that gender is a non-issue and that cultural equality and opportunity is far more crucial an issue.

6.3.2 Funding - At the time of the survey one third of all respondents' positions were internally funded with two thirds being externally funded. The external funding sources include: Department of Aboriginal Affairs (four positions), the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (one position), the Commonwealth Department of Education - Special Course Funding (ten positions) and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission - Additional Places Funding (five positions).

A large number of respondents were not clear on the nature of the external funding source used to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as they had no access to budgetary information. There was much confusion amongst respondents about the differences between Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Additional Place Funding and Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training Special Course funding. This may well be an area for further research.

It is apparent, and I believe a concern, that any number of the external sources may be combined to form one salary, for example, use of CDEET Special Course funds plus DAA funding. This creates uncertainty in employment and results in anxiety and low morale. The funding authorities operate different yearly cycles for funding, confusing this situation even further.

Of the four tenured academic positions, the levels of appointment vary from Lecturer 2/1 to Lecturer 1/3 to Senior Lecturer(2) and the funding source in three cases is internal and in one case external.

Overall there is a correlation between the source of funding and the type and period of position. Internal funding is associated with the permanent employment of

academic staff and both permanent and contract employment of clerical assistants. External funding is associated with contract employment of ancillary and academic staff. Clearly very few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would be employed either on contract or as permanent staff in higher education centres in NSW if external funding was not available to the centres.

In a number of NSWAECEG enclave forums, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander network committee meetings and Higher Education Centre External Advisory Committee meetings there is a reluctance to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in positions which require higher levels of funding and internal commitment to longer term funding. Hence, the majority of contract employment for respondents with contracts varies from one to four years. Externally funded positions are technically affected by guide-lines allocating funds on an annual financial calendar; hence the most common contract period amongst the survey respondents being 12 months.

6.3.3 Previous Schooling -The highest level of schooling reached by respondents varied from year 2 to year 12. The majority of respondents reached year 10 (28%) and year 12 (32%), with 20% reaching a level below year 9.

The final year of school attendance for respondents ranged from 1949 to 1983, with 16% of the respondents last attending school in 1969.

6.3.4 Higher Education Credentials - 58% of all respondents have higher education awards ranging from Associate Diplomas to Degrees. Of those respondents holding higher education awards 21% have an Associate Diploma in Social Welfare and 53% have a degree/diploma combination or degree in education (Primary and Secondary). Others have degrees in electrical engineering, arts and a bachelor of letters.

63% of respondents employed in academic positions have higher education awards, mainly at the degree level. 61% of respondents employed in ancillary positions have higher education awards, mainly at the Associate Diploma and Diploma levels.

6.4 Analysis of Higher Education Survey Against a Background of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Perceptions of Higher Education

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres have raised various issues and concerns that have been echoed in the general issues raised by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people. Any discussion and analysis must consider the recent experience that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have had specifically, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally have with participation in higher education (Chapter Five). Though the experience is recent the perceptions expressed are not at all naive. They have not a special place in the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in, and reaction to higher education. Some kind of longitudinal research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education would reveal I believe issues and concerns that reflect an initial contact with higher education. It is the researcher's contention that our experience may somewhat shadow the experiences of North American indigenous people in higher education (Saskatchewan Indian Federated College and Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatchewan Canada); whereby people initially content to participate within a culturally alien higher education structure move towards developing structures and frameworks that reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

6.4.1 Survey Respondents' Attitudes and Perceptions of Employment in Higher Education- Respondents commented on a variety of issues including: research and publication, issues of importance in academic employment criteria, the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people only within Aboriginal Education Support Units and not within the general institutional structure, equal employment opportunity, employment strategies, promotion, tenure, career paths and their individual aims and goals.

ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE IN EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE EMPLOYED AS ACADEMICS IN HECs:

1. Academic Qualifications

The majority of respondents (58%), academic (73%) and ancillary (46%), believe that academic qualifications are important but not essential criteria to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in academic positions within their education centres.

2. Aboriginality

54% of respondents, 70% academic and 46% of ancillary staff, believe that Aboriginality is an essential criteria for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in academic positions rather than merely an important criteria.

3. Ability

58% of respondents, 54% academic and 62% ancillary, believe that ability (left to the respondent to conceptualise the meaning) is essential criteria for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in academic positions in higher education centres.

The different degree of importance placed on academic qualifications being important and on Aboriginality as being essential for the academic employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by both categories of respondents is significant. A larger number of academic staff (45%) considered that academic qualifications were essential employment criteria than ancillary staff (31%). The fact that more academic staff (70%), as opposed to 45% of ancillary staff, placed so much emphasis on Aboriginality as essential criteria for academic employment may reflect their perception of the importance of cultural identity and Aboriginality in such an environment. It is an interesting statement by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff who are currently employed in HECs that Aboriginality and academic qualifications are both seen as essential criteria for academic employment. The need for a blending of the best of two different cultural worlds is an important interpretation of this statement. There are some significant policy implications emerging from information such as this.

PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES:

A slight majority of respondents feel that there is no opportunity for promotion in higher education centres. Ancillary staff (54%) expressed this concern more so than academic staff (45%).

The written responses reflect on the:

- * uncertainty of employer and employee in defining the roles of a new position;
- * nature of external funding;
- * employment of people for a specific purpose within AESUs;
- * slowness of such promotion in HECs

From an assessment of respondents' written comments Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is still perceived to be marginalised in HECs. As a result individuals do not seek or realise the potential for promotion.

IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTION:

The majority of respondents (62%) feel that promotion is important to them individually, more so academic staff (54%) than the ancillary staff. When asked an open ended question about important issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education, very few respondents indicated that individual promotion is important. There is a concern for more community - oriented broader issues.

IMPORTANCE OF TENURE:

Tenure or permanency is overwhelmingly important to all respondents (83%), as individuals asked a directed question with three options for comment; yes, no or not sure. As with the issue of promotion, tenure is an important individual concern, but it is not a major priority in response to an open ended question about important issues and concerns for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as a whole. Again, communal rather than individual issues are important.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION:

1. The majority of respondents (80%) would like to do some form of research. The ancillary staff have stated that they have the interest (80%), but lack the time and the opportunity through their duty statements to research and publish. Of the academic staff 60% feel that they have the time for research.

2. 60% of all respondents believe that research and publication is an important criteria for academic employment. The academic staff expressed strong opinion on this (70%); whereas the ancillary staff were less in favour of this (54%).

3. 42% (9) respondents; academic (45%), ancillary (39%), already have done some forms of research and had their research published. Publications have taken the form of newsletters, conference papers and reports, journal articles, books and curriculum materials.

PLANNING A CAREER IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A majority of respondents (50%) are planning a career in higher education; more academic staff (64%) than the ancillary staff. Interestingly almost a quarter of the respondents chose not to respond to this question or were undecided.

REASONS FOR PEOPLE CHOOSING TO WORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A variety of reasons exist for the respondents' choice. Both academic and ancillary staff (83%) were apparently 'interested' in the advertised position to which they applied. This interest factor was more important to the academic staff (82%) than the ancillary staff (62%). The second most recorded factor (67%) was "the experience that such employment would offer". Academic staff (73%) again saw this 'experience factor' as more important than the ancillary staff (62%) did. A 'challenge' factor was the third highest recorded reason (62%) for taking an employment opportunity in higher education. Academic staff (64%) and ancillary staff (62%) placed equal importance on this factor. Other reasons expressed by respondents for choosing to work in higher education centres were the salary (33%), the security, promotional prospects (12%),

opportunities to promote the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cause as widely as possible (4%) and the fact that there were no vacancies for a teaching position (4%).

PROFESSIONAL AIMS, GOALS, AND ASPIRATIONS:

1. The majority of respondents (29%) appear to be undecided about their professional aims, goals and aspirations. Ancillary staff (46%) appear to be more undecided than the academic staff (10%).
2. Completion or the continuation of studies is an important goal (26%). The ancillary staff (31%) are more concerned about this than the academic staff (18%).
3. Academic staff appear to be oriented towards "accessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to their chosen fields of study" (30%) and in "developing appropriate courses for Kooris and to encourage Kooris to be more aware of the power of knowledge, thereby encouraging greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community participation in higher education centres" (20%). Knowledge as a concept was not elaborated on by any of the respondents. The researcher interprets the meaning of knowledge to be academic learning.
4. Overall academic respondents appear to be more community and service delivery oriented than the ancillary respondents, who appear to be concerned mainly with the completion of further studies.
5. Other aims articulated by a minority of respondents include: research (18% of the academic respondents), to become a Head of Unit or a Senior Lecturer in a Department (10% of the academic respondents), and to promote Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander issues to as wide an audience as possible (8% of ancillary staff).

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:

87% of all respondents believe that EEO is important in the academic employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in HECs. Two respondents chose not to respond to this question and one respondent felt that EEO was not important. Written responses indicate that EEO is important because of the

- * racism within HECs;
- * need to redress a past lack of access to this type of employment;
- * utilisation of special skills and talents that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have but have not had the opportunity to express;
- * need to demonstrate the capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the general community;
- * need to increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed as academic staff within HECs;
- * the specialised area of expertise needed in teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and culture.

There was some negative concern expressed that the concept of EEO was really only reflecting women's issues and needs. The feeling expressed by a couple of respondents was that any preoccupations with women's issues and needs has meant that few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people really understand EEO.

EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES:

When respondents were asked to identify three employment strategies that could be built into EEO management plans there seemed to be a concern expressed by a minority that they did not know enough to contribute to this question. Other respondents expressed a need for a wide range of strategies; from "greater Koori control of Koori programs" to "a recognition that more EEO support is needed for Aboriginal men". People suggested the development of internships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, the 'identification' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions, the development of appropriate communication about procedures of selection and application for employment and about positions available through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, professional and personal development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, the targeting of positions, stricter enforcement of existing EEO and greater commitment from higher education centres to make EEO more effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, making EEO co-ordinators and their strategies accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in some way and finally the use of proper support facilities.

CONTACT WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES:

1. The majority of respondents (68%) were able to have contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as a standard component of their job specification. This contact took many forms: informal social gatherings (91%), meetings (90%), conferences (61%) and to a lesser extent day to day interaction because respondents live in the community (32%). Those respondents unable to have contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities expressed a need to do so.

2. 83% of respondents felt that their employer did not discourage their community involvement.
3. 90% of respondents believe that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to which they belong supports their position.
4. 74% of respondents believe that a suitable framework exists within their higher education centre to inform members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about their work.
5. 54% of respondents feel that non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have interaction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. All see this type of interaction as important, as do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people. People responding to the researcher's Community with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities "to let us know about the courses available". Information should be presented in ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can respond to. Even those people unable to read need access to the type of information that higher education centres produce about courses. Having access to this information means that these people can direct and inspire our youth and others to go onto higher education.

Regular contact between HECs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was also seen to be necessary so that "HECs be educated in Aboriginal ways"; "HECs and Aboriginal communities can monitor improvements and seek support" thereby "finding out the needs of Aboriginal people".

EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE IN AESUs ONLY, OR IN HIGHER EDUCATION CENTRES' GENERAL STAFFING:

All respondents believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must seek employment within the general structure of the higher education centre. Feeling was expressed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must not be limited to employment in AESUs within higher education centres. One written response which encompasses other respondent's feelings states:

As part of the broader Australian community Kooris should be represented in all areas especially educators positions. Academic positions are extremely powerful in their ability to shape attitudes and knowledge of tomorrow's professionals. Not only positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander role models but also it is important for all Australians to receive information from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

People's concerns therefore have been expressed in terms of the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as 'agents of change': people who can influence other people's thoughts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Broadening the individual's horizons, gaining new skills and knowledge of other areas which are essential for personal and community development were also needs articulated by respondents.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people currently working in higher education centres have a range of questions and issues which concern them about their employment. The most common issues raised were:

- * The consideration of non-academic criteria for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into academic positions; including life experience, a

person's Aboriginality and a person's cultural background and traits. These should be given considerable weighting in the selection of personnel.

- * The opportunity for regular contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as part of employment. Credit must be given for work done with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to the employee.

- * Opportunity for training and for professional and personal development. Currently, career paths for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are in the main limited to within Aboriginal Support Units. In raising this as an issue people have articulated a need for time to be in-serviced on the institutional structures that people work in and skills in management, administration, counselling and other functions associated with their employment. .

- * Commitment, dedication and motivation towards Aboriginal education were viewed as important traits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic employees. People expressed the opinion that the employment was more than a job, it was a community responsibility, hence the need for these traits..

- * Support, encouragement and opportunity for higher education studies, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can advance academically along academic career paths. Currently people's involvement through their employment makes further study a low priority. Higher education centres could raise this priority by advising and providing study leave for those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees interested in post graduate studies. .

- * Ability and knowledge were articulated as important because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders need to be properly equipped to work effectively and not

employed solely to meet Affirmative Action Legislation and therefore 'set up' for failure. .

* Job security through tenure or permanency rather than contracted employment is seen to give people a sense of belonging and the opportunity to develop programs for students rather than worry about individual employment. .

* Appropriate salary and status for responsibilities and duties performed; these being clearly delineated and publicly stated. Currently Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people perform functions at a level much higher than either our level of salary or status would indicate. The tasks performed are different to those performed by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and in some ways are still evolving. As a result existing structures within higher education centres do not yet effectively accommodate these tasks either individually or collectively. .

* Opportunity for promotion, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have the option of a career path in higher education if so desired. As previously stated promotional opportunities are few and tend to exist, if at all, in Aboriginal Education Units. .

* Experience of the higher education sector as a whole and institutionally was articulated as an important issue in the academic employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

6.4.2 Analysis and Discussion of Issues about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation in Higher Education - The participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education has been perceived by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the last two decades as an important mechanism to provide people with appropriate skills and knowledge necessary to

enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community development and ultimately to make us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people responsible for our own destiny. These perceptions have been articulated in conference forums, at meetings and some people responding to the researcher's Community 'survey' state that higher education will lead to 'Self-Determination'.

There is a danger in assuming that participation in higher education and skills development through higher education are linked to community empowerment and self-determination, an assumption articulated by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and by some non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As a discriminated minority we will remain a powerless, discriminated group of second rate professionals if people do not gain experience and knowledge of the dominant group. The professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander can only empower our Community if we gain experience of the dominant systems, incorporating our own cultural values and knowledge to create a wholly relevant system that reflects and addresses our needs. People responding to the Community 'survey' expressed similar concerns thus:

"Education is a total process - both formal and informal, Aboriginal people should be competent at both skills to use and develop the systems (institutions, government departments etc) from within the system." "Great emphasis is placed on higher education if Aboriginal people are to influence the community then we need to be able to operate at both levels." "In this society without paper qualifications, political advice through department policies are usually received as tokenistic. We need to influence policies as professionally trained individuals to affect change."

The feeling has also been expressed that trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals will contribute to the sensitization process of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

and our cultures; breaking down the stereotypes associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia:

"I believe Koori people have the character and drive within themselves to become highly skilled professionals within the wider community which would instil pride and act as role models beside breaking down the stereotyping by non-Aboriginal society."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have a role educating non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about a rich part of their history that the latter have previously chosen to ignore.

There was a strong feeling expressed by people commenting in the Community 'survey' that the most important fields of study for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enter are the 'helping' professions such as teaching, law, welfare, nursing or the commercial areas of business and computing. This has been reinforced in recent conference forums and as themes in national discussion papers.(Hughes, 1988, and NAEC, 1984)

The reasons for people's choices again reflect the desire to change non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attitudes towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the desire for self-management and self-determination for the community as a whole not for the sake of the individual:

"To help our people"

"To be better equipped to help our people."

"Deeveloping Aboriginal people and communities."

"Hopefully Kooris educated in these fields will contribute to their own particular community development."

Teaching and welfare were perceived as being particularly important fields of study because "I think the Kooris need other Kooris in these jobs". The importance of

role models is reiterated as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people having specific cultural skills and qualities crucial to the development of appropriate and improved services for recipients of teaching/welfare services. At the same time a concern exists for people having to leave families and communities for long periods of time to study; and a concern that "higher education centres were not providing adequate support structures for Aboriginal students - thereby setting them up for failure".

The need for adequate and appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support programs cannot be denied. Racism, immersion in a culturally alien environment and pressures on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to know all about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture are reasons articulated by some continuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, enough to justify the need:

"Because we are expected to know everything about all Koori issues. It is difficult to be a student as well." "If there is an 'enclave' people feel comfortable." "Even though there may be support programmes the institutions are still alien environments especially in mainstream courses." "As Koori students we are isolated, operating on different educational backgrounds. Special background and identity to a different learning style and cultural background. Racial harassment a major concern." "There are still many pressures during studies and certain attitudes or remarks can make a person feel unwanted."

These programs can only function effectively if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are involved in the programs at all levels; the design, delivery, management and evaluation, thereby ensuring a constant consultation process.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be employed in HECs, "being visible in all areas of employment as they are able to be role models and support agents" and thereby increasing the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education.

Teaching, counselling, liaison and tutoring were perceived by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people as being the most important roles for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be employed in. Employment in clerical positions is important and to a lesser extent the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as groundstaff is important. All of these roles are important because when combined they create a supportive and non-threatening environment to strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in higher education centres goes beyond the realms of employment to the need to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as students, guest speakers, committee members and advisers.

Success in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is not defined by people simply graduating. A significant school of thought exists which fears assimilation and loss of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity as a consequence of a higher education experience:

"Academics are still expecting people to change their ideals and values to middle class values." "Some do change they get whitewashed." "Some are unwillingly swallowed into the system." "They lose their identity when there is no support available."

Higher education centres are perceived by some to:

"Educate or brainwash people into the society in which we live." "Educate people to higher standards and hopefully receive that little piece of paper that says we are educated persons, in the white way."

There is seen to be an element of cultural conflict between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'way' of educating. The two systems are not seen as necessarily compatible but both are essential for

change and progress. Wilmott argues that it is the Separatists that have adopted theories of acculturation proposed by the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychologists and educationist where "European-styled education, or rising competence and ability to deal with the culture of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in fact produces acculturation and eventual assimilation".(Wilmott, 1986, p.26) Wilmott asserts that there is little evidence to suggest that acculturation amongst adults is an applicable phenomenon. He further states that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Evolutionists assert that "European education simply provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with empowerment in another cultural system, and it does this without detracting from the Aboriginality or cultural base of the student".(Wilmott, 1986, p.26)

The conflict that exists between these two schools of thought is likely to be resolved only through continued experience by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within higher education systems, longitudinal research and discourse amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are to participate equitably in higher education, whether a Separatist or Evolutionist, there can be no doubt that ultimately "Kooris need the support of other Kooris", of "families and communities", and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support staff through Aboriginal Education Support Units operating within higher education centres.

The effective operation of Aboriginal Education Support Units within higher education centres requires the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have similar interests and aspirations to other employees in seeking the types of experiences and the challenges that employment within the higher education sector offers. Currently, however, the opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to seek more challenging

experiences do not exist. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and indeed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs are demonstrably marginalised from the majority of higher education centre structures that operate currently. The reliance of higher education centres on a multiplicity of external funding sources offers most people limited contract employment for an average of one year for ancillary staff and two to three years for academic staff. It would be so easy for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the programs that they work in to vanish if the funding supplies vanished. The recent amalgamation of a number of the funding sources, namely DEIR and CDE to form CDEET has not reduced the problems associated with multiple funding sources. Higher education centres should internally fund Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment believe that this "shows their commitment to Aboriginal education" and in so doing demonstrating that "Aborigines are part of the community", or "As Kooris we have a legitimate right to participate in higher education without taking our funding baggage with us" according to some community people. Internal funding is thought by some respondents to the Community 'survey', as possibly leading to permanent employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees;

For too long institutions have used money from Aboriginal Departments and then used Aboriginal enrolment as a lever for more funding for the general institution. Enclaves which are an appendage to the institutions can be at risk due to lack of money - (if funding was refused). Employed Aboriginal personnel are not seen as permanent employees when outside the institution.

Other people expressed the view that Commonwealth funds should be utilised by higher education centres to "seed" and/or supplement Special Programs developed for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders;

"Initially special funds leading to firm commitments by the institution to provide their own funds supplement by Commonwealth funds" or "Their own funds but

there should be special funds and positions (positive discrimination) available if the need is there."

The existing funding arrangements are totally unacceptable. They unnecessarily cloud the effective operation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and reduce most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities to the confines of Aboriginal Support Units that in the main have been marginalised from the higher education centre itself.

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to capitalise on their interests, to develop new skills are virtually non-existent. Higher education centres must reassess their commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in higher education. Political and financially inspired motives for involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education by HECs are not enough. Education and participation by people is the issue, not the politics nor the financial reward. Higher education centres must initiate, in full consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, plans and policy in the area. It is clear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee respondents in this survey that there is a permanent place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and staff within higher education centres. That is not to say that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should only be confined to working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs. Again it is clear that it is time for diversification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees' skills and employment opportunities within HECs. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people currently employed in higher education centres perform a range of tasks not wholly confined to AESUs. In fact more recently a larger number of academic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are branching out from the AESUs through teaching, either from their own specialist disciplines or from the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies/Education. This effectively means that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are diversifying their

skills, acting as role models to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and they are helping to shape the professional non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander minds and attitudes of the future. So what happens to this when external funding sources terminate? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are left in 'no-persons' land once more.

Higher education centres must take the initiative to provide job permanency and security for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as they do for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. They must seek ways to harness the energy and enthusiasm that exists amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. They must take care because many employees are suffering from sheer frustration and exhaustion from riding around on an annual funding merry-go-round. The creation of career path opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would clearly, from the survey responses, be an excellent start. This of course implies greater internal funding of positions and therefore permanency or tenuring of positions. The creation of stability could lead to the development of some very innovative, culturally appropriate programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as well as an exchange of this knowledge and skill with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

EEO is a vehicle already operating within higher education centres and should be utilised much more for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Survey respondents saw a need for EEO but felt they lacked any knowledge about it. Promotional opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be an issue of concern for all EEO co-ordinators as it is an issue of concern for women and other target groups. A number of respondents commented on the preoccupation with women in the EEO movement. An opportunity exists for this not to either be the case or at least perceived as the case by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This requires an assessment of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and

education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about the boundaries and functions of EEO.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents have indicated that involvement in the decision making processes are critical; especially where external monies are being sought and utilised for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander salaries. Too many people expressed ignorance of the funding arrangements for their salaries and programs because of a lack of access to information about the funding sources by higher education centre personnel. This process of institutional racism is a perfect mechanism on the part of the higher education centres to control and prolong the marginalisation process of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

Higher education centres must create an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal opportunity. At the present time they offer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people very little, but they take a lot. To create academic employment for increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people positions need to be clearly defined. Roles need to be specifically and publicly stated; a situation that does not currently exist. Roles should accommodate regular contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, which means periods of absence from the higher education centre, time for research and publication as well as due acknowledgement of the work people do in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and designated duties at appropriate rates of pay. When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees were asked to identify one aspect of staffing they identified the following aspects; more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Aboriginalisation of Aboriginal Support Units, recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community involvement necessary for staff as part of their function, permanency and tenure, identified positions in Aboriginal Support Units, recruitment, internal funding of employees and therefore recognition and acceptance within the higher education centre, removal of tokenism, paternalism and racism,

reassessed criteria for the academic employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in decision making, overseas experience as part of professional development with other indigenous people, and a need to safeguard against "ego-tripping" because of their positions in "white-type" bureaucracies.

Employment criteria must be reassessed to include factors such as ability and Aboriginality as essential criteria and academic qualifications may be considered important but not essential. Any assessment needs to take account of the value of life and community experience as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivor in this country, and the realisation that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have as a result of these experiences special cultural skills and knowledge, to be shared with the general community.

Respondents have indicated a clear sense of their need to improve themselves through employment and further education within the higher education sector. The ancillary staff appear to see this as a stepping stone to academic employment. Both staff and community members have indicated a desire to access Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to higher education, to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students making informed decisions about their career and study options in as wide a range of fields as possible. The feeling is that ultimately this will lead to better informed and skilled communities making decisions about themselves for themselves: self-determination. Higher education centres have a role to play, not a patronising, tokenistic role, but a meaningful, realistic and constructive one. If they are prepared to demonstrate a financial and philosophical commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education; and to recognise worth, then the fear expressed by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (the Separatists) - that HECs merely brainwash and assimilate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - will no longer exist. Appropriate experience and discourse may well lead to an appropriate and

acceptable higher education system; one that reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, within a system.

6.5 Conclusions

Ultimately Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the community level and/or as staff and students within higher education centres have one overriding aim, for equitable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and participation in higher education. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders also have a few simple goals or objective statements. The aim is: Through a truly Indigenous place of learning within a higher education centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will become empowered to manage and determine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander destiny, on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms of and meeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander standards of excellence; second to none.

The objectives appear to be:

1. To communicate and create an awareness about higher education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2. To establish a dialogue between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and higher education centres about their goals and their needs.
3. To improve the quality of education in higher education centres for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
4. To increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff across all fields of study and levels of employment.

5. To co-ordinate and plan for the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in the higher education sector.
6. To achieve equity.

There are also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people growing in number who see meaningful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education being addressed only through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled places of higher learning.

Willmot believes that the "effective entry of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into tertiary education in the 1970s and 1980s will have a lasting effect on the society". This empowerment process, he goes on to say, will have "both costs and gains. The gains are equity. In my view this is the only non-political way to gain equity in modern Australia. Some now fear a cultural cost. Whatever that cost is, the option is isolation and its consequence - economic, political and social marginality".(Willmot, 1988, p.27)

It is my feeling that using Watson's model the cultural cost some associate with existing higher education structures would become non-existent because higher education centres would have had to meet the challenge of opening up 'dialogue' with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acknowledging an alternate living tradition.(Watson, 1988, p.9) Under these conditions the ultimate aim of equitable access and participation to higher education will be realised. Equity would then be seen culturally as well as numerically. The following strategies were articulated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey respondents and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community people as a possible means to achieving equity: .

* internships .

- * identification of positions .
- * appropriate communication through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations of selection procedure and of information about specific positions
- * professional and personal development .
- * targeting positions .
- * stricter enforcement of existing EEO legislation and procedure .
- * greater commitment from higher education centres to make EEO beneficial for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- * to make EEO co-ordinators and their strategies accountable to Aboriginal communities. .
- * the use of proper support facilities.

Clearly, the EEO legislation is seen as an important tool to improve successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education. The next chapter focuses on such legislation and describes the strategies thus far developed by EEO co-ordinators to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education. A central concern in these strategies is the awareness that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees admit to little knowledge of the concept of EEO and the implications of EEO for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in Higher Education Centres.

Chapter Notes

1. These insights are the result of the author's involvement in the area of higher education for a decade and a half. They are what Michael Polanyi terms 'personal knowledge'.(Polanyi, 1958)
2. Since the compilation of this information, Head of Centre or Unit positions have been advertised in four higher education centres at Senior Lecturer 1 levels.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION IN AUSTRALIA AND ITS EFFECTS ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTICIPATION IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

This research has indicated the extent to which the increased access and participation that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have found to higher education in the 1980s was a product of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy, changes in government policy toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, changed perceptions of higher education amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and a climate of raised consciousness about discrimination. To date this study has focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy (Chapter Four), changes in government policy toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Chapters Three and Four) and the changed perceptions of higher education (Chapter Six). The increase in access and participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has also occurred against a background of anti-discrimination legislation and sentiment. This chapter will focus on the background, the administration and the impact of the legislation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education.

7.1 Legislative Background

Australia as a nation initiated a legislative stand on anti-discrimination during the 1970s. The first federal initiative occurred in 1973 when the Commonwealth ratified

the United Nations Convention No.111 - Discrimination in Employment and Occupation.(EEO Management Plan, Mitchell CAE, 1986, p.2) This convention:

affirms that all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity.

Nations which are signatories of the Convention undertake to:

declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof.

For the purposes of the Convention, the term discrimination' includes:

any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation.(EEO Management Plan, Mitchell CAE, 1986, p.2)

The Commonwealth government with regards to the above convention made the decision to implement national policy, initially without imposing legal sanctions. A national, and six state committees on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation were established. Membership consists of representatives of governments, employers, trade unions, and on the National Committee persons with special knowledge of issues

concerning women, migrants and Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.(EEO Management Plan, Mitchell CAE, 1986, p.2) These latter groups have become target groups for all anti-discrimination legislation in Australia. "Discrimination legislation on the federal level is directly related to the ratification of a number of international conventions and declarations".(EEO Management Plan, Mitchell CAE, 1986, p.3) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination ratified by Australia in 1975 led to the enactment of the Racial Discrimination Act, 1975. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified in 1980 led to the enactment of the Human Rights Commission. The ratification in 1983 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women resulted in the enactment of the Sex Discrimination Act, 1984.(EEO Management Plan, Mitchell CAE, 1986, p.3) The Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Bill was legislated in 1986 as a further response to the above convention. Of these Commonwealth legislations the government has amended the Racial Discrimination Act to give full strength to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act where it has greater scope. Where Sex Discrimination legislation is "satisfactorily operating" these states were empowered to administer the Sex Discrimination Act on behalf of the Federal government (ODEOPE, 1983, p.19). The Federal government also has "the constitutional power to legislate in respect of higher education centres which it funds through the States".(ODEOPE, 1983, p.19)

The Affirmative Action Legislation (1986) requires employers to develop and to implement Affirmative Action programs by 1 August 1986. These programs shall provide for the following action to be taken:

- a) for a senior officer to issue a statement on behalf of his/her employer indicating the development and implementation of an affirmative action program on a specified day;

- b) confer responsibility for the development and implementation of the program (including a continuous review of the program) on a person(s) authority;
- c) consult with each trade union having members affected by the proposal for the development and implementation of the program in accordance with this Act;
- d) consult with employees of relevant employers, particularly employees who are women;
- e) collection and recording of statistics and related information concerning employment by the relevant employer, including the number of employees of either sex and the types of jobs undertaken by or job classifications of, employees of either sex;
- f) to consider policies and examine practices, of the relevant employer, to identify any discrimination or patterns of lack of equality of opportunity for women;
- g) to set objectives and make forward estimates in the programs;
- h) to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the program and to assess the achievement of those objectives and forward estimates. (Affirmative Action Bill 1986. Part 11 i (1), p.6)

Relevant employers are expected to prepare a public report:

- a) initially, on the development and implementation of the employers' affirmative action program. This was to be submitted within 12 months.

- b) subsequently on the further development and implementation of the employers' affirmative action program is legislated for.(Affirmative Action Bill, 1986, Part IV, 13 (1) a-b).

These public reports were to provide:

- a) statistics and related information concerning employment by the relevant employer, including the number of employees of either sex and the types of jobs undertaken by, or job classification of employees of either sex; and
- b) an outline of the processes undertaken by employers to prepare the initial report and further develop and implement the report.(Affirmative Action Bill, 1986, Part i 13 (3), p.9)

A separate confidential report detailing and analysing the processes undertaken by the employer to develop, implement and further develop and implement the affirmative action program.(Affirmative Action Bill, 1986, Part IV 14, p.9)

Failure to submit a report or comply with a request by the Director for further information may result in that employer being named as such in parliament.(Affirmative Action Bill, 1986, Part IV 18, 19, p.10)

In NSW the Anti-Discrimination Act was legislated in 1977. The Office of the Directorate of Equal Opportunity and Public Employment was established in 1980 through an amendment known as Part IX A. The establishment of ODEOPE heralded in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) as policy of the NSW government.

For the purposes of this legislation EEO is "the merit principle: i.e. the selection of the best person in employment, promotion and retention, irrespective of

race, sex, marital status or other irrelevant personal characteristic".(ODEOPE, 1983, p.45)

The amendment required all public employers and government departments declared as authorities to prepare and implement equal employment opportunity management plans. These management plans were to be submitted to the Director of ODEOPE for evaluation. A further requirement was the submission of annual reports by the authority to the Director as an evaluation of progress.(ODEOPE, 1983, No.5, p.14)

On 16 December 1983 higher education centres were scheduled under Section IX A of the Anti-Discrimination Act by proclamation; published in the government gazette. The proclamation indicated that these centres were required to prepare management plans and commence the implementation of the management plans on or before 1 June 1985.(EEO Management Plan, Kuring-Gai, 1988, Vol.1, April) It was anticipated that higher education centres would voluntarily comply with the state legislation. As it became clear that the centres were not going to comply with the state legislation, it became necessary to "schedule" higher education centres; to bring them under the legislation. This reluctance to comply is significant in the development and implementation of EEO management plans, specifically with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.

EEO was recognised by the NSW government as more than "complaint-based" legislation. It incorporates affirmative action or "the taking of positive steps, by means of legislative reform and management programs, in order to achieve demonstrable progress towards equal employment opportunity".(ODEOPE, 1980, p.23)

Ziller outlines the advantages of affirmative action as

i) in an affirmative action programme, responsibility for identifying, locating and researching into discriminatory practices, and for taking active and effective steps to reform those practices, rests with the senior officers of each organisation. Those with the power to make policy, and to reform it, are charged to use that power to bring redress to the victims of discrimination, rather than leaving the victims themselves to act as the sole agents of change.

ii) affirmative action is addressed simultaneously to direct and indirect forms of discrimination [Both forms are defined more fully in the Affirmative Action Handbook, ODEOPE, 1980, p.15] constituting systemic discrimination when combined.

iii) an EEO management plan provides a means of measuring change. Because it has a statistical basis the effects of actions taken to remove discrimination procedures can be tested over time. The management plan is more than a research document. It is a set of strategies to remedy identified problems: i.e. it includes affirmative actions.(ODEOPE, 1983, No.5, Nov.)

Part IX A of the Act states two 'objects':

- a) to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex and marital status.
- b) to promote equal employment opportunity for women and members of racial minorities.(Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977, s.122C., p.88)

Given these objects and the affirmative action ethos embedded within Part IX A of The Act, it is not surprising to find that employment authorities and government departments were expected to submit management plans that must comply with the following provisions:

- a) the devising of policies and programs by which the objects of this Part are to be achieved;
- b) the communication of those policies and programs to persons within the authority;
- c) the collection and recording of appropriate information;
- d) the review of personnel practices within the authority (including recruitment techniques, selection criteria, training and staff development programmes, promotion and transfer policies and patterns, and conditions of service) with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices;
- e) the setting of goals or targets, where these may reasonably be determined, against which the success of the management plan in achieving the objects of the Part may be assessed;
- f) the means other than those referred to in paragraph (e), of evaluating the policies and programmes referred to in paragraph (a);
- g) the revision and amendment of the management plan; and
- h) the appointment of persons within the authority to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (g) (Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977, s.122 J (2))

In addition the legislation requires that authorities and departments submit annual reports to the Director, specifying "the activities and programmes undertaken" as part of their EEO management plans during the year and, "the results achieved by the activities and programmes ... including redistributive effects in the workforce" as well

as "the proposed activities and specific aims" for the following year.(Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977, s.122 L (2))

Where the Director is dissatisfied with any matter relating to the preparation or implementation of a management plan by an authority or any failure or omission of an authority with respect to the preparation or implementation of a management plan, the Director may refer the matter to the Anti-Discrimination Board.(Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977, s.122M)

The Anti-Discrimination Board may then institute an investigation on the basis of which it may make a report to the Minister, in this case the Premier. The Minister may then direct the department or authority to amend its plan in a specified manner. The department or authority is bound to comply with this direction.(Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977, s.122S, (11))

According to Ziller, within the higher education sector Anti-Discrimination Legislation is unnecessarily complicated by the need to comply with both state and federal legislations. Clearly according to Ziller (1988) the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act is a much stronger legislation than the Commonwealth legislation enforcing greater action on behalf of the employer, through the development of detailed and public management plans, and the submission of annual reports.

7.2 E.E.O. Management Plans - A Descriptive Analysis

EEO management plans are a recent phenomenon. There is no evidence at this point in time to indicate if the plans and their strategies are/are not impacting on the increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in higher education in NSW. As indicated in Figure 5.2 there is an increase in the participation rates during the latter 1980s at the same time that management plans became a requirement for HECs. However, most HEC management plans and in particular the strategies designed to increase participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, have not had time to be tested. I believe that some analysis and discussion of the management plans is important at this point in time.

Emerging from an analysis of EEO management plans (Equal Employment Opportunity Co-ordinator 1983-1985) are a number of similar themes and strategies:

1. Identify positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
2. Create and increase equitable career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in HECs.
4. Assertiveness training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
5. Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on decision-making committees within HECs.

6. Take care in the placement and the distribution of advertisements for positions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could apply for.
7. The utilisation of DEET and other training programs to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
8. Ensure proper procedure within selection committees.
9. Assess whether the current selection procedure is discriminatory.
10. Eliminate linguistic discrimination against women.
11. Create access to staff development and training.
12. Increase the numbers of people from the target groups participating in staff development.
13. Membership by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of internal and external higher education centre committees.
14. Overcome self-discrimination.
15. Rotation and lateral transfer of staff.
16. Assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to improve their prospects for reclassification, promotion and progression.
17. Develop an adequate data base to assess appropriate EEO policy.

A closer inspection of the strategies to assess their compatibility with the needs expressed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, reveal major inadequacies. The strategies avoid the real issues associated with providing equal employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The whole concept of EEO is "culturally bound" (Kalantzis et al., 1988, p.1) as are the strategies so far developed by EEO co-ordinators, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as one of the target groups. It is the view of the researcher that they tend also to be transcriptions of strategies designed to provide equal employment opportunity for women which have been transplanted into what is perceived as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context. The context and the terms of reference are non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. It is not appropriate to merely transcribe a set of strategies from one context to another. Terms of reference need to be placed within the appropriate cultural context. For this to occur appropriate consultation between all parties is essential. Not enough consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has occurred in the design of the strategies. In a clear majority of cases the collection and analysis of data concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres was an inadequate base for the development of strategies. The higher education centres employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (with the exception of one centre) made the comment that "there were too few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed to warrant statistical analysis or any further discussion, because of the fear of anonymity". How do EEO co-ordinators know what to develop if they are not prepared to analyse the collected information in such a way as to guarantee anonymity? The original EEO survey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has become nothing more than an exercise in wasting precious time. The compilation of statistical evidence is critical for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for forward planning and increasing equitable, culturally relevant participation.

The real issues that have been consistently avoided in management plans include that of appropriate employment criteria; including Aboriginality and other non-academic criteria, meaningful involvement on committees and not merely tokenism, culturally and professionally relevant staff training and professional development, and appropriate placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education within the higher education centre. The idea that emerges from the management plans is that if you increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, involve them in ordinary staff development, assess any existing discriminatory practices, talk about creating career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and appoint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to committees, then equal employment opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be achieved. This is not the case. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's needs are not the same as those of women when striving for equal employment opportunity. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must determine our own needs; needs that are culturally based, not based on a gender within the dominant culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's needs are far more complex than current management strategies suggest.

The notion of 'Identified' positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is to a certain extent being adopted by a larger number of higher education centres throughout NSW. However, they are only identifying externally funded positions, generally administrative ones and only within Aboriginal Education Units or Aboriginal Education Centres. The current use of 'Identified' positions is marginalising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education even further than it has been in the past.

It is purely rhetorical to identify the need to create and increase equitable career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to offer nothing more than vague reference to staff development and training; or to assertiveness training. No

one has assessed what type of training or staff development is necessary to create and increase equitable career opportunities. Overseas experience with other indigenous groups was articulated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees as one form of professional development that could be desirable. Information about EEO and its implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in HECs was also seen by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees as a valuable form of professional development. No staff development is offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees that addresses these needs. Assertiveness training, identified as important by EEO Co-ordinators, is itself a culturally biased concept. Some form of assessment and related implementation is critical if staff development is to be meaningful.

The desire to increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in higher education centres, through the establishment of targets, may seem admirable. In itself this strategy is both limited and patronising. The strategy avoids the issues of detailed yet flexible job specifications and links to decision-making committees, on-the-job training with access to academic education where and if appropriate, and the overall placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on decision-making committees within higher education centres is important for the status and future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education if the people chosen are informed of the procedure, and if those chosen have a voice, and are not merely tokens.

The need to design and appropriately place advertisements for positions within higher education centres is obviously important if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are to be attracted to positions on offer. There is, however, no need for advertisements if the employment criteria knocks out potentially good applicants.

Higher education centres' utilisation of DEET and other training program funds avoids the real issue of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and then offering training and staff development as an integral component of employment. Currently higher education centres utilise the funds to employ people, without training them appropriately. They utilise the funds for employment for as long as the funding is available. Most of them do not provide employment after the training period expires. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in such training programs have articulated through many workshop and conference forums a sense of having no tangible future or goals. Their expectations of the employment situation are more often than not shattered. They wander from one training program to the next. It has become a point of jest amongst the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community that we must be the most trained and the least employed race of people. NEATS and TAPS were established to provide training which developed the skills appropriate for continued employment in the place of training. They were never designed to be an easy source of funding for higher education centres to take advantage of.(1)

Clearly ensuring proper procedure on selection committees is important but Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating on such committees must be informed and sensitised. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership must not be tokenistic. The compilation of registers of appropriate and available people to participate on selection committees is a worthwhile and concrete strategy.

In any assessment of existing selection practices several questions must be addressed to ensure effective assessment. Firstly, what criteria is to be used to assess discriminatory practices of assessment? Secondly, who will be involved in the assessment? Thirdly, is the assessment geared for discriminatory practices against each of the target groups or is it primarily examining discrimination against women?

A noteworthy, constantly recurring strategy throughout the management plans was the need to eliminate linguistic discrimination against women. No mention was made of the linguistic discrimination against any of the other target groups. Racist language is as inappropriate as sexist language.

Accessing people to staff development and training is important if the training in terms of content and method of instruction is culturally and professionally appropriate. It is not appropriate to slot Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into a training program simply because one is operating. Merely increasing the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in institutional staff development does not guarantee that these participants will gain any skills or knowledge. The training content and methodology must be culturally appropriate.

Rotation and lateral transfer of staff, that is, the movement of staff to different faculties or departments to develop and perform different tasks, is an excellent idea to be embodied within a training program. However, problems may arise if this is utilised for people who have specific tasks to perform as part of their employment as it distracts from the tasks at hand. The rotation and lateral transfer of staff may be useful as an occasional form of staff development if programmed publicly and as an integral part of the person's tasks so that there is no confusion as to the person's whereabouts and a replacement person is found to carry out the tasks not being done.

The conveyance of information about ways whereby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff can improve their prospects for reclassification, promotion and progression is a critical idea that the management plans must articulate into concrete strategies to meet their objectives of real staff development.

7.3 Administration of Part IX A of the Anti-Discrimination Act in NSW

The Directorate of Equal Opportunity and Public Employment administer the Act. ODEOPE is headed by a Director. An Assistant Director was appointed in 1984 with responsibility according to Ziller for the higher education sector. This responsibility became untenable because the sector is small.(Ziller, A., 1988) As a result the higher education sector responsibility was moved to an adviser's level, primarily to capitalise on the individual's interest and expertise. Ziller emphasises the difficulty for people from within the directorate working for "such a rigid sector".(Ziller, A., 1988)

ODEOPE appointed an Aboriginal Liaison Officer in 1986 after much lobbying from within the ranks of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the NSWAECC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed within the higher education sector made recommendations at conferences and communicated orally and through correspondence the desire for the Directorate to appoint such a person if they were serious about EEO for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The people who have held this position over the years have worked with the public sector primarily. The only contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from the higher education sector was through workshops run through the directorate and publicised through higher education centres and public service authorities and departments.

Within the higher education centre itself EEO Co-ordinators were appointed primarily in the administrative area at fairly low graded levels. A Director of EEO was appointed from within the higher education centre, this has tended to be the Principal, Deputy Principal or Vice-Chancellor. An advisory committee has been established in

each higher education centre, comprising of centre staff to advise the EEO Co-ordinator and Director.

Figure 7.1 indicates the various offices and channels of communication involved in the Anti-Discrimination legislation. Obviously the channels are complex, indirect and unsystematic, fostering minimally effective communication. Ineffective communication can hinder the effective and successful implementation of a policy.(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p.205)

7.4 The Impact of the Legislation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation in Higher Education

It is too early to state conclusively whether the legislation has had either positive or negative effects on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education. Higher education centres have only recently, between 1983 and 1988, submitted their management plans. The implementation of the strategies developed within the plans is in many cases dawning. However, a discussion of some of the features of the legislation will determine the likelihood of its succeeding in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context; thereby meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and not solely the aims of a government.

The legislation states clearly and publicly its aim is to increase the participation of particular target groups in higher education centre employment. Ms Ziller (former Director of the Office of the Directorate of Equal Opportunity and Public Employment) asserts that the NSW "policy is very concrete; it requires action, accountability, annual monitoring and improvements on previous performance. Employment authorities, in this case higher education centres, cannot 'procrastinate by investigating'".(Ziller, A., 1988) The embodiment of the notion of Affirmative Action, the development of management plans with strategies and the requirement to report annually on the

effectiveness of strategy implementation are features that would encourage higher education centres to address the aim of the legislation.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LEGISLATION.

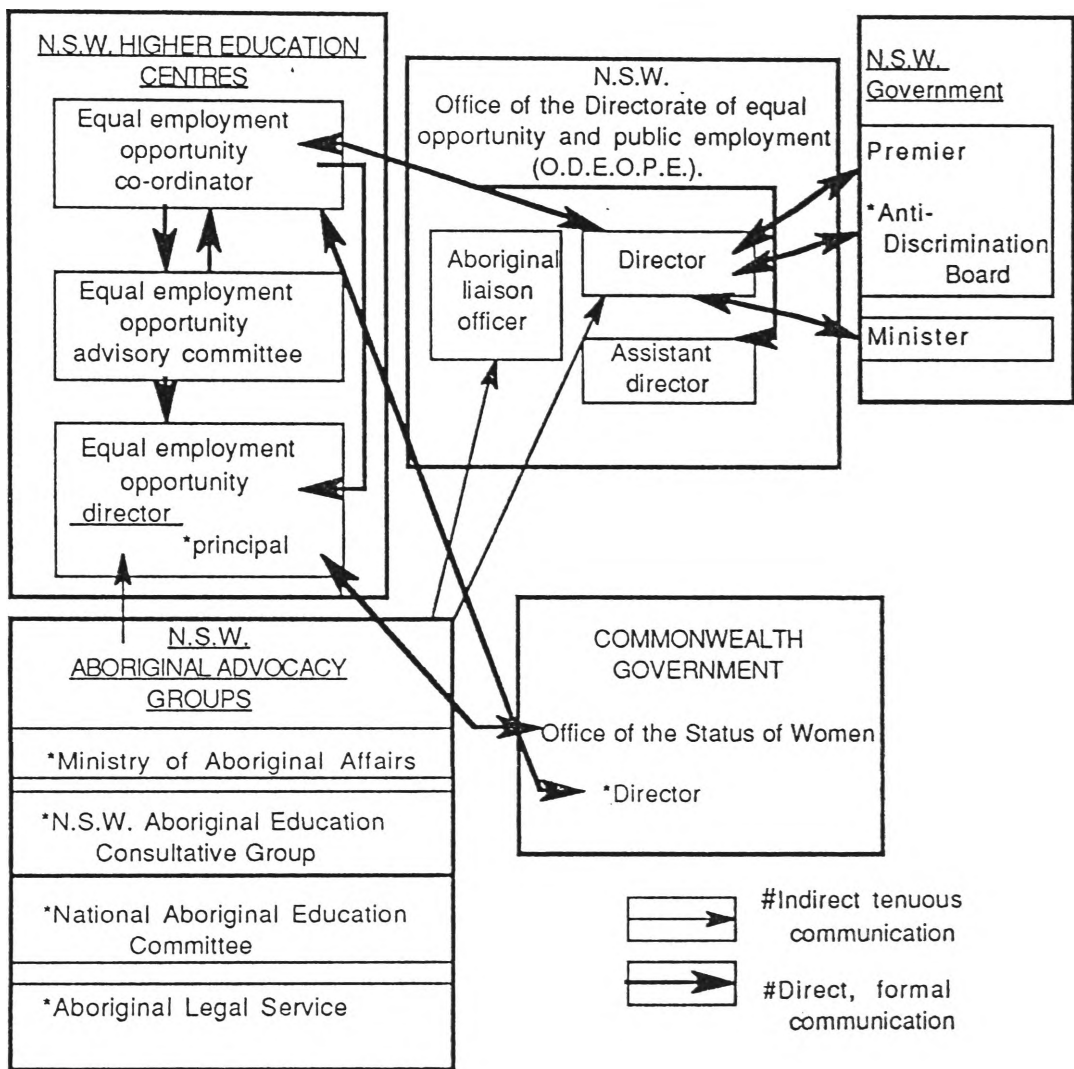


Figure 7.1

There is, however, a fundamental problem which has emerged previously in this study (Chapters Four, Five and Six). That is, the use of "white terms of reference" (Watson, 1988, p.4) that are "culturally bound".(Kalantzis et al, 1988, p.1) The concept of EEO itself is defined from within certain cultural boundaries.(Kalantzis et al, 1988, p.1) Within the higher education sector the problem of definition becomes even more complex. According to Ziller the "higher education centres are designed to prevent action, they are institutions of inertia not institutions of change. They are highly resistant to new knowledge because they see themselves as guardians of knowledge".(Ziller, 1988) There are not too many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in the sector that have not expressed(2) experience of this inertia over the last five years.

A discussion of EEO management plan strategies (Section 7.2) has already alluded to some inherent problems within the most commonly developed ones. The issue of appropriate employment criteria is one that requires further comment in this context. The requirement of academic qualifications for most academic employment ignores "past Aboriginal perceptions and experiences of the academic environment" and past education experiences generally.(Watson, 1988, p.4) Ziller asserts that "Aboriginal communities' bank of skills is low".(Ziller, 1988) This is one perception, and a truth in the context of white Anglo-Saxon skills. However, an alternate perception is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have certain skills appropriate to academic employment that have not yet been articulated or explored. The notion of "identifying positions" for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attempts to address the issue of increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment by recognising 'Aboriginality' as a criteria for employment. This notion has been used as criteria for ancillary employment not academic employment as yet. Employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the academic arena challenges the notion of equal employment opportunity. Some higher education centres

are prepared to consider Aboriginality as criteria for employment within Aboriginal Education Support Units or the teaching of Aboriginal Studies. If the notion of 'Aboriginality' as employment criteria can be comfortably fitted into the existing structures and philosophies then reform is accommodated.

The attempt to reform, though, is bounded by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic terms of reference. There must be "dialogue and harmony between the two cultural traditions" if reform is to be truly equitable, and if the aim of the legislation is to be realised in a meaningful way.(Watson, 1988, p.9)

As already indicated in Section 7.2 the management plan strategies to date do not reflect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Whilst this problem exists the impact of the legislation will remain minimal. The strategies must be reassessed within the appropriate cultural context, so that they reflect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and higher education centres alike.

In Chapter Six, section 6.4.1, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people currently employed in higher education centres articulated the view that they know very little about EEO. One aspect of effective policy implementation is effective co-ordination and communication.(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p.205) Figure 7.1 indicates the current complexity of channels of communication in the administration of the legislation. The need for higher education centres to comply with two government agencies, State and Federal, is one problem within the communication network that lessens the degree of accountability (Ziller, 1988) and therefore effective implementation. The role of Aboriginal Liaison Officer is a crucial link in the chain of implementation. This person, however, has from the inception of the position worked in the public sector. The role needs to be reassessed to include higher education centres or else a new role needs to be created for someone to work within the higher education sector if the legislation is to succeed in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context.

Ziller states that "there is a need for much more overt Affirmative Action with Aboriginal people".(Ziller, 1988) If the legislation in the future is to have impact on increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the higher education sector this must be borne in mind. It must be considered though in the context of a reassessment of the terms of reference for equal employment opportunity. This can only occur if the administrators of the legislation (Figure 7.1) communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Ms O'Shane (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocate and Chief Magistrate) has stated that an "increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in higher education would have happened despite the Anti-Discrimination Legislations of the 1970s and 1980s".(O'Shane, 1988) The likeliness of the legislation to have impact on increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the higher education sector is not high given the above problems.

Chapter Notes

1. These comments are derived from 'personal knowledge' from being a 'participant observer'. For further information refer to Chapter One Section 1.3.
2. Expressed in many conferences; including NSWAECC Enclave conferences, 1984, 1985; NSWAECC Community Awareness Seminar, 1985.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education has increased dramatically over the last two decades. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perceptions of higher education have changed as opportunities for schooling and tertiary education have been created over time through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy, and changes in Government policies toward Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Government Anti-Discrimination legislations have created a climate that recognises the need for social justice and equal opportunity. There can be no doubt from this study that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want to participate in higher education as students, staff, consultants and supporters. Higher education is seen to provide knowledge and skills to people that will foster self-determination and self-management within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Successful participation cannot simply be measured by an increase in numbers. Any increase needs to be assessed in terms of student retention and attrition rates, staff transiency, the degree of permanency and level of appointment offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, the functions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff perform and ultimately cultural maintenance and strengthening.

This study has demonstrated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not want to participate if the cost is a loss of cultural identity and dignity. That is, participation that produces teachers, as one example, that happen to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, rather than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. The days of assimilation should have long gone by. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

people should not have to assimilate into higher education centres in order to participate in higher education. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to participate in a higher education that has developed terms of reference that reflect the strength, depth and timelessness of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

8.1 Future Scenarios

Future scenarios of increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education depend on the strength and power of the stakeholders. Stakeholders such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, government, the public servants involved in implementing Affirmative Action legislation at State and Commonwealth levels, the public servants involved in developing, implementing and evaluating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education policy and those staff and students involved in higher education centres.

It is the opinion of the researcher that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will in the near future continue to have high expectations of higher education. These expectations on their own may influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the sector. They may also be harnessed into degrees of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy for increased participation and in some instances reform. Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community expectations and levels of advocacy on government are crucial constant factors impacting on the increased participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education. They have therefore been presented as components of the following scenarios.

Government through its various bodies; the Higher Education Council, and departments/ divisions; including the Higher Education Division and the Department of

Employment, Education and Training may impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation through policy development and funding allocations to higher education centres or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Commonwealth Government has been influential in increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in the 1980s with the introduction of special funds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs designed to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation. Higher Education Centres have responded to Commonwealth government funding initiatives whether purely from a mercenary and indeed expedient point of view or from a genuine desire to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation within the sector. Implied within the presented scenarios is a government commitment both moral and economic that is favourable and constant. This is done not as a statement of political naivety but as a statement of the need to lessen the importance of government as a factor in Aboriginal education. The educational needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be determined from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience not from government morality and philanthropy.

The impact of the Affirmative Action Legislation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education is, as already stated in Chapter 7, an unknown variable at this stage. The legislation; State and Commonwealth, is young. Affirmative Action Legislation is presented as a variable in the scenarios as it has been specifically designed to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education.

There are other factors which have impact on the increase of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education which are not presented within the following scenarios. Factors such as those people involved in implementing government policy either in government departments or higher education centres and those people in higher education centres prioritising needs and developing policy of

their own on various issues. They have not been isolated within the scenarios because they in part are subsumed in government. The task of these people is to implement government policy. Any further breakdown of the components would make the discussion far more complex than is appropriate within the context of this thesis. It is however appropriate for researchers of the future to deal with such complexities.

A glimpse into the future therefore presents three such possible scenarios.

Scenario A presents the continuation of high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community expectations of higher education; low levels of advocacy on governments by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, or at the best dispersed and factionalised advocacy; and EEO management plans that are based on rhetoric, uninformed and inappropriate strategies. This scenario is fairly negative and would not satisfy any of the stakeholders. Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in higher education could suffer.

Scenario B demonstrates high expectations of higher education by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, low levels of advocacy by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people but EEO management plans that have been fully implemented. This scenario would satisfy the government and the individual higher education centres because of the obvious increased participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people due to effective government legislation through EEO. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities would view this scenario as being too culturally expensive; it could be viewed as too assimilationist and the type of participation would not have developed the skills necessary for self-determination and self-management.

A third scenario suggests high expectations of higher education by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; increased and more organised advocacy by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the development of State and

National policy, a tangible concrete direction to move in; and EEO based on action rather than rhetoric. This scenario is the most favourable towards an increase of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participation in higher education. As policy development is occurring within NSW and at a national level this scenario may appear to be feasible. Appropriate policy development including mechanisms to communicate the intent of the policy and to implement the policy to all stakeholders is critical if this scenario is to become a reality. Communication channels need to become less complex. The key players; EEO Co-ordinators and managers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must become more informed in the delivery of EEO legislation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW if it is to be realised in the context of this scenario.

At a time of economic restraint and significant change within the higher education sector in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy cannot really afford to wane and any policy must be action oriented and not fall into the trap of rhetorical pleas and suggestions. There are currently many competing interests for funds within the higher education sector and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education must be strongly advocated for as a high priority across the sector, not just as one more issue from within the multitude.

The next section highlights some possible strategies to ensure the realisation of a C-type future scenario for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

8.2 Strategies for Increased and Meaningful Participation

NEGOTIATION AND DIALOGUE:

A statewide forum needs to be arranged by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to workshop and articulate our needs and aspirations from higher education. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must define the parameters of the debate and eventually establish terms of reference appropriate to quality participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had two decades of experience in higher education in NSW and this has given the key players; students, staff, consultants, and advisers, an expertise from which to articulate our needs and aspirations. To date our experiences and much of our debate until the mid 1980s has been concerned with the development of programs that "fit into" existing higher education centres; those that operate on monoethnocentric terms of reference. The parameters of the debate have been confined. The parameters of the debate must be opened up so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise can determine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terms of reference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we have a right to enunciate our needs and aspirations as well as a right to choose and, if necessary, develop more appropriate forms of higher education.

Once Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have determined our own terms of reference for participation in higher education a second statewide forum involving non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from ODEOPE, from State and Federal Governments, from higher education centre executives, EEO Co-ordinators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including students, staff, advisers, and community, needs to be initiated. The purpose of such a forum would be to

negotiate the most effective forms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education.

Traditionally, systems and structures have been imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by Government and by Higher Education Centres themselves, with selective consultation but without holistic negotiation. It is not an unreasonable strategy nor is it economically wasteful to implement a strategy of appropriate dialogue and negotiation. In fact it could be argued that such a strategy is an economically useful one. Governments must therefore resource such a strategy.

As indicated throughout this study (Chapters five and six) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education in NSW has been ad hoc in nature and design; that is, reactive. Reactive to the politics of Affirmative Action legislation, amalgamations and economic restraints within the higher education sector in the decade of the 1980s and to a lesser extent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy for general human rights; including access to citizenship and to education generally.

The 1990s must be proactive times for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Within the framework of Federal government policy of Self Determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we must be given the opportunity to assess, analyse, develop and evaluate appropriate strategies and structures; not from an imposed deficit model but rather from a model that operates from a strong cultural base, for our effective participation in higher education.

RESEARCH:

Opportunities and resources need to be created as a matter of priority by higher education centres and government, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to research and compile accurate data on: concepts of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, the historical developments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in NSW, the funding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy, and the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students in higher education, and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs from higher education, to list only a few. An accurate data base would help foster appropriate policy development.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must in consultation with representatives from Commonwealth and State governments, and executive staff from higher education centres develop policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education .

A statewide mechanism could be funded by both State and Commonwealth governments to develop such policy. NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities cannot develop policy in isolation from the rest of the country, and national representation in any type of mechanism is essential.

Currently, national policy development is occurring in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. This policy development holds potential to impact on all educational sectors, including the higher education sector. As has been noted elsewhere, the direction of development has been from government to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, not from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

communities to government. Some people may argue that it is politically naive to expect the latter to occur. The researcher would argue that within the context of an overriding Commonwealth government policy of Self Determination and Self Management for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have an unequivocal right to determine and manage any policy that affects our lives. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are only now, having been granted citizenship rights and access to mainstream education in the last two decades, in a position to articulate quite clearly the needs and the parameters of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in education; indeed in society. It is at this point that negotiation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and government should render effective policy development, including its implementation.

THE EMERGENCE OF A COMMUNITY OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SCHOLARS:

Willmot asserts that as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we need to be able to "intellectualise our culture" (Willmot, 1986, p.27) in order to maintain and strengthen our Aboriginality. If this is the case we must assess our own terms of reference, our own pedagogy, our own contemporary philosophies about education, health, law, science and technology and so on. A community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars(1) to articulate such thoughts on an intellectual plane rather than an emotional plane and to collect, collate and analyse appropriate data will hasten our empowering process. We will be able to communicate with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians on our own terms and within our own structures. We will be able to develop, implement and evaluate policy that is not only meaningful to us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, but to all Australians.

There is an urgency for each of the above strategies to become reality. If this is done Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be a step closer to self-management and self-determination. Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be rewarded with the sense of:

.....putting down roots in this land, and tapping into a past measured in tens of thousands of years .. to when the land of this country gave birth to Aboriginal people.(Watson, 1988, p.1,9)

Chapter notes

1. Scholars is defined here as people interested in the process of articulation of culture. The term does not imply membership of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with academic qualifications from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education centres. On the contrary it implies membership of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have something to say based on their life learning.

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APPENDIX A

ABORIGINAL PERCEPTIONS OF ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

[A survey conducted amongst Aboriginal communities in NSW for Nerida Blair's Master of Arts
(Honours) Thesis, August 1988]

The information that you give in this survey will be CONFIDENTIAL. It will be used by myself as a Koori student as part of a thesis (essay) that I am writing on Koori peoples' employment in Colleges and Universities in NSW. It is important that I know how a large number of Koori people feel about Higher Education (this is education in Colleges and Universities).

All information is important. Your opinions are important. You do not have to put your name on the paper. If there are things that you would like to say to me in response to a question but feel that the ideas are lost by you writing them down then please feel free to phone me REVERSE CHARGES during work hours on (02) 929 0199 Mondays, Thursdays or Fridays or (02) 680 1977 on Tuesdays.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

Nerida Blair

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What suburb or town do you currently live in?
2. Where are you from?
3. Are you MALE _____

FEMALE _____

(Please tick one of the boxes)

4. How old are you? Less than 18 years ☐
18-25 years ☐
25-35 years ☐
35-45 years ☐
Older than 45 years ☐

(Please tick the right box)

5. Are you Married ☐
Single ☐
in a De Facto Relationship ☐
A Single Parent ☐

SECTION B: FORMAL EDUCATION

6. What level of schooling did you last do? ☐
Primary ☐
Secondary ☐
Up to Year 10 ☐
Secondary ☐
Up to Year 12 ☐

(Please tick the right box)

7. In what year did you last go to school? 19 ____

8. Did you like going to school? ☐
Yes ☐
No ☐

9. If you liked school why did you like it?

If you did not like school why didn't you?

(Please write your feelings or reasons on the lines provided)

10. Have you ever done any courses other than those done at school?

Yes ☐
No ☐

(Please tick the right box)

If yes, was it a course done through?

TAFE Name of Course _____
COLLEGE Name of Course _____
UNIVERSITY Name of Course _____
OTHER Name of Course _____

11. Did you finish the Course? Yes ☐
No ☐

12. If yes, how long was the Course?

13. If yes, in what year did you do the Course? 19__

14. If yes, did you like the Course? Yes ☐
No ☐

15. If yes, was there any support for you as a Koori student at the College?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If there was support, what sort was there?

Koori Staff Member ☐
Koori Home Room ☐
Tutors ☐
Other: ☐
(Please tick the right box)

Please describe the type of support.

16. If you have never done a course outside of school would you like to?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, describe what sort of course you would like to do.

SECTION C: PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS

17. Do you feel that Koori people should go to University or College to do courses?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Could you please explain your answer?

18. If you feel that it is important for Kooris to do courses at Colleges and Universities what type of courses do you feel people should do?

Journalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nursing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	Law	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		explain	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Please tick the boxes you think are important)

Could you explain why you think the courses that you have ticked above are important for Kooris to do?

19. If you don't think Kooris should go to College or University to do a course, why shouldn't they? Please explain your answer.

20. Do you think that Kooris going to University and College today feel comfortable there?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Any comments you wish to make ...

21. What do you feel that Colleges and Universities can offer Koori people?

22. Do you believe that Koori people should be employed in Colleges or Universities?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Why or why not?

23. What type of jobs do you think Koori people should be doing in Universities or Colleges

Teaching ☐

Counselling ☐

Liaison ☐

Tutoring ☐

Clerical ☐

Gardening ☐

Other ☐

24. Should Universities and Colleges use their own funds to pay Aboriginal people or should they rely on additional Commonwealth monies?

Their Own ☐

Commonwealth ☐

Both ☐

Why?

25. Should Colleges and Universities only employ Aboriginal people in the running of Aboriginal Education/Support Units?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Why/Why Not?

26. Should Universities and Colleges have regular contact with Koori Communities?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, in what ways?

27. Should Koori people be represented on committees within Universities and Colleges; for example a College Council (this is the governing body of a College)?

Yes ☐
No ☐

28. Do you feel that Koori people must have academic qualifications to work at Colleges and Universities?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please explain why or why not.

29. Are there particular jobs that you think Kooris should have academic qualifications; for example teaching qualifications to teach at the University or College?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please explain why and what sort of jobs you think are important

If no, please explain why not.

30. Do you believe that Koori community people and elders should be able to be employed at Universities and Colleges to teach Aboriginal Studies without academic qualifications?

Yes ☐
No ☐

31. Do you feel that Universities and Colleges should employ Koori elders to counsel and strengthen Koori students' sense of their own Aboriginality?

Yes ☐
No ☐

32. How do you think that Koori people can be involved more in Universities and Colleges:

as students	<input type="checkbox"/>
as staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
as committee members	<input type="checkbox"/>
as visitors on campus	<input type="checkbox"/>
as guest speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>
as tutors	<input type="checkbox"/>
as supervisors of students doing field experience	<input type="checkbox"/>
or practice teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
as advisers	<input type="checkbox"/>
other	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Please tick the boxes you agree with)

33. Do you feel that Higher Education (University or College education) is important to Koori people?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please explain why or why not.

34. Do you feel that when Koori people go to College or University they change and they lose their identity as Aboriginal people?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please comment on how and in what ways do you see this happening?

35. What types of support do you think that Koori students need at College or University?

36. What do you think that Colleges and Universities do?

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts with me.

Nerida Blair

APPENDIX B

SURVEY OF ABORIGINAL STAFFING NEEDS AND CHARACTERISTICS IN NSW COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES 1987

RESPONDENT INFORMATION: SCHOOLING

Final Year Attended 19__

Final Level Reached 19__

Name of Last School Attended: _____

Your Aboriginal Community: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Name of Higher Education Centre Currently Employed At: _____

Name of Position: _____

How long have you been in the above mentioned position: _____

How long has the above mentioned position existed at the College/University where you work? _____

Have you held any other positions of employment at the above mentioned place of employment (Please circle) YES/NO

If yes, what position _____

At what level of employment? _____

For how long? _____

How was the College or University funded for each of these positions?

Internal ☐

External ☐

Comm. Ed. ☐

State Ed. ☐

D.E.I.R. ☐

C.T.E.C. ☐

Additional places ☐

D.A.A. ☐

Other, please specify ☐

What were your duties/responsibilities?
(Attach additional information or an official statement of duties
if one is available _____

Did you have a Duty Statement? _____

If yes, did the Duty Statement match your day-to-day responsibilities and
tasks? _____

If no, explain further please _____

Was the position(s)	Contracted	<input type="checkbox"/>
	-how long	_____ years
	Tenured	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>

Did you have regular contact with Aboriginal communities as part
of your duty statement?
yes ☐ no ☐

What type of contact did you have with Aboriginal communities?

Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Live In	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please explain: _____

Did your employer discourage or inhibit your community
involvement?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please explain further if you wish _____

Did the Aboriginal community with which you were associated fully support your position and what you were doing in higher education?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comment _____

Was there a suitable framework for informing members of the Aboriginal community about what you were doing?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comment _____

Do non-Aboriginal staff with whom you work have close interactive contact with members of local Aboriginal communities?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comment _____

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Qualifications currently held:

Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type, e.g. Social Welfare	
Associate Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	B.Ed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	B.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	M.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post Graduate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify	_____
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Where did you undertake your academic training? _____

Qualifications currently studying for:	Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Associate Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Graduate Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

In what field? _____

Stage of course _____

Expected time of completion _____

Ultimate goal in terms of academic qualifications:

Completion of Masters Degree ☐

Completion of a PhD ☐

Remain at my present level ☐

Other goals ☐

Do you have any publications?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Could you list those that you have? _____

Do you have time in your present position to research and publish?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Would you like to research and publish?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you see research and publication as important criteria for academic employment?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Are academic qualifications:

important ☐ not relevant ☐

essential ☐ unnecessary ☐

criteria for academic employment? _____

What level or award? _____

Is ability an: important ☐

essential ☐

criterion for academic employment?

Is Aboriginality an:

important

☐

essential

☐

criterion for academic employment in Aboriginal Education Centres?

Do you feel that Aboriginal people should seek academic employment in Universities and Colleges outside of AECs?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Why? _____

Why not? _____

What do you feel are the 5 most important questions or issues relevant to the employment of Aboriginal people in academic positions in Higher Education Centres (HECs)?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Is EEO important in the employment of Aboriginal people in academic positions in HECs?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Either way, why and how? _____

Could you identify 3 employment strategies that could be built into EEO Management Plans for Aboriginal staff in higher education?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Do you feel that you have opportunity for promotion in your current position?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please explain how? _____

Is promotion important to you in your career?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Is tenure important to you in your present position?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Are you planning a career for yourself in Higher Education?

Yes ☐ No ☐

What are your professional aims, goals or aspirations in regards to higher education? _____

Why did you choose to work in higher education

Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Promotional	
				Opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Challenge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Security	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Name one aspect of Aboriginal staffing that you would change in higher education if you had the opportunity.

Additional comment if required _____

Thank you for responding to this survey

Individual responses will be regarded with the strictest confidence.

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